

# MODERN LANGUAGE QUARTERLY

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June, 1957

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# MODERN LANGUAGE QUARTERLY

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## GRILLPARZER'S INDIVIDUALITY AS A DRAMATIST

By I. V. MORRIS

Grillparzer, the dramatist and poet, has usually been seen in relation to other poets and dramatists, and his works interpreted in terms which are not always appropriate. Thus they have been measured by the yardstick of German classicism to see how far he realizes the ideals of content and style primarily established by Schiller. Or they have been examined on the assumption that there is only one kind of literature, namely, that of the great masters. Their works may be described as organic, for within the framework of literary convention in a play by Shakespeare, Racine, or Goethe we feel we are witnessing a piece of life; there is the depth and thickness of life, and the plot develops by the interplay of character and action; in addition, the whole is presented objectively, it is not obviously colored by the subjective moods and thoughts of the artist, so that the truth that emerges about the particular problem presented is universal in its validity.

This description corresponds to Schiller's definition of naïve poetry, and Grillparzer has frequently stressed his desire to be *naïv* after the fashion of the poets he most admired, namely, Goethe, Shakespeare, and Lope de Vega. He also said he preferred to "stehen bleiben, wo Schiller und Goethe stand,"<sup>1</sup> and has therefore, perhaps, encouraged critics to look at his works in either or both of these ways. Recently he has been interpreted more specifically as an Austrian poet, and stress has been laid on his links with Austrian Baroque and the Viennese popular play.<sup>2</sup> This again agrees with what he himself says: "Meinen eigenen Arbeiten merkt man an, daß ich in der Kindheit mich an den Geister- und Feenmärchen des Leopoldstädter Theaters ergötzt habe."<sup>3</sup> Such an approach is, however, also one-sided and almost as unsatisfactory as the others in determining Grillparzer's individuality as a dramatist. He was certainly influenced by his own Austrian tradition as well as by that of Weimar and European poetic drama as a whole and also by the bourgeois realism of the nineteenth century. But he does not fit into any one tradition; in fact, his individuality as a dramatist consists precisely in evolving a composite form which embraces all these various traditions and which is, at the same time, the appropriate medium for what he has to say.

Grillparzer's first play, *Die Ahnfrau*, is a masterpiece of its kind.

<sup>1</sup> Grillparzer, *Werke* (including *Selbstbiographie, Tagebücher, Briefe*, etc.), Historisch-kritische Gesamtausgabe, ed. A. Sauer (Wien, 1909- ), *Gedichte*, Abt. I, Bd. 10, p. 249.

<sup>2</sup> Emil Staiger, "Grillparzer: 'König Ottokars Glück und Ende,'" *Trivium*, IV (1946), 229-50.

<sup>3</sup> *Tagebücher*, No. 3882, Abt. II, Bd. 11, p. 132.

As a fate tragedy in the romantic tradition it was in agreement with the young Grillparzer's own disposition and also with the type of play he had been accustomed to see as a child in the Viennese popular theater. It is spectacular and theatrical, relying on outer events and atmosphere rather than on detailed characterization to propel the action and produce the catastrophe. As such, it is very different from the organic literature I have described. Furthermore, although Grillparzer felt that this play was too subjective,<sup>4</sup> it is so only in so far as the theme is concerned; he does not identify himself with any of the characters; he is outside, as it were, and the impression is that of an impersonal expression of his romantic pessimism.

*Die Ahnfrau* was an enormous success, and Grillparzer became famous overnight as a fate dramatist. He, however, was horrified at finding himself acclaimed as such, and indeed the effect on him might be compared to the shattering impact of Kant's philosophy on Kleist. That it was a shock of a fundamental nature and of decisive influence on his future development may be surmised from the recurrence of two kindred themes in the plays that follow, namely, the rude awakening of a frequently naïve hero to self-awareness (e.g., Ottokar, Otto, Hero, Rustan), or his disorientation on being drawn forth from an inner circle of security and strength (e.g., Sappho, Medea, Banchanus, Rustan). Certainly Grillparzer was never again to have the same unqualified stage success, nor indeed the ability to create with the same speed and spontaneity. He was also suddenly wrenched away from a type of drama which was in keeping with his own temperament and tradition. For his very next play was intended as the exact opposite of *Die Ahnfrau*; it was to be "ein Gegenstück dieses tollen Treibens."<sup>5</sup>

This play, *Sappho*, was influenced by Goethe's *Tasso*,<sup>6</sup> and Grillparzer now consciously looked to Weimar for guidance in his efforts to disprove his critics. He also seemed intent on establishing himself in the wider tradition of European poetic drama as it was cultivated in England, France, and Spain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and in Weimar in the eighteenth century. For within the next ten years or so he wrote five plays which by their classical or historical content and verse form belong in this tradition. This meant writing a different kind of drama: character tragedies<sup>7</sup> implying psychological motivation of the plot and a more elevated poetic style, and having greater depth and inwardness than had been possible in *Die Ahnfrau*—in fact, the sort of literature I have described as organic.

Of these five plays *Sappho* comes nearest to the goal he had set

<sup>4</sup> Cf. letter to Müllner, Abt. III, Bd. 1, p. 97.

<sup>5</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>6</sup> See Douglas Yates, *Frans Grillparzer* (Oxford, 1946), pp. 38-39.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *Selbstbiographie*, Abt. I, Bd. 16, p. 130, where Grillparzer comments on the stage success of *Sappho* as a play in the tradition of Lessing, Schiller, and Goethe, i.e., one dealing with "menschliche Schicksale und Leidenschaften."

himself: it is the most dignified from the point of view of language and also the most dramatic, for of all Grillparzer's heroes and heroines, Sappho is the most active and most tragic. The play is the dramatization of his own conflict: he is Sappho, and has, as it were, effected the change-over and become the kind of poet he felt he ought to be. But it was an exaggerated conception of the artist which did not satisfy him, as it no longer satisfied Sappho. Her attempt to bridge the gulf between art in an ivory tower and life fails, but her death does not solve the problem. She kills herself not in tragic despair at her failure, but from a mistaken sense of guilt inspired by her romantic conception of art.

As the presentation of a deeply felt experience, *Sappho* is the thickest, the most unified, and hence the most organic of these five plays. The end of the play, however, reflects the continuation of the problem for Grillparzer. He still strives after the ideal he had set himself in the plays that follow, yet with growing distrust and dissatisfaction. His nineteenth-century realism and various other sturdy factors which had been reflected in Phaon and in Sappho herself react against the high-flown idealism of his aim; but as he no longer deals with the ensuing inner conflict directly as in *Sappho*, it might be said to go underground and enter the form of his plays. This makes them uneven as long as they are of the organic type of drama. Thus *Das Goldene Vließ* and *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen* reveal his difficulties as a writer of character tragedies in an elevated style. But by solving these difficulties in *König Ottokars Glück und Ende* and *Ein treuer Diener seines Herrn*, he evolves a new type of drama which is individual and successful. He does not solve the problem, but he finds the terms to present his conflict.

Grillparzer never quite overcame the fatalism that was an essential part of *Die Ahnfrau*. Both in *Das Goldene Vließ* and in *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen* there is at times an all too conscious awareness of human frailty visible in the characters' almost fatalistic abandonment to their passions. Thus Hero, who, after all, is a priestess, surrenders to Leander without any thought of the vows she had taken. But this is not in keeping with the tragic nature of the plot which implies a conflict. Furthermore, the effect of tragedy is not to destroy all values, but rather to present them in perspective. Yet the dominant and most moving note in these plays is that of *vanitas vanitatum* and the longing for an ideal quietistic realm far removed from the vain and vulgar world of action and passion. Thus the vanity of the quest for fame is stressed in the *Vließ*, the vanity of love emerges in *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen*, and even the vanity of poetry<sup>8</sup> is hinted at in *Sappho*. That this pessimism is deeply felt but subjective, lyrical rather than dramatic, is clear from an examination of the language. Particularly in the many elegiac or

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Werner Vortriede, "Grillparzers Beitrag zum poetischen Nihilismus," *Trivium*, IX (1951), 103-20.

fatalistic speeches, made sometimes indiscriminately by different characters in the same play, the elevated diction is truly poetic.

As well as in their subjective pessimism, these two plays are in some other respects not up to the standards implied by their theme and form. The attempt to idealize the characters and make them universal, in the sense that the heroes of Shakespearean or French classical tragedy are typical of mankind in general, which was also the aim of Goethe and Schiller, is not wholly successful. In fact, some of the characters might be described as "psychological cases." Thus we first see Medea as an abrupt, undemonstrative young girl, intent on outdoor occupations in the primitive setting of her barbarian home; she is a priestess, but there is no indication that her powers extend beyond the skillful brewing of potions and sayings of spells. Then when Phryxus, the first Greek who comes in search of the Fleece, is murdered, she is suddenly transformed into a disillusioned sage, brooding in a tower and indulging in elegiac speeches. All that is psychologically credible as the result of a terrific shock in one so naïve and buttoned-up as Medea is at first, but it can hardly be regarded as typical of mankind in general. It even seems unreal and gruesomely romantic, and her behavior from now on, though occasionally natural and sincere, is often far from being true to human experience as we know it. In *Sappho*, on the other hand, there is no such incongruity between the heroine's character and the rhetorical language and theatrical plot. Sappho is the romantic poetess, passionate and given to rhetorical outbursts in elevated language; it is thus quite in keeping when she sweeps about in a cloak with a lyre in her hand and finally leaps to her death from a rock.

If the elevated diction was suitable in *Sappho*, we observe its pernicious effects in *Das Goldene Vließ*, and also at times Grillparzer's unconscious criticism of it. The first part of the play is almost completely in the style of the Viennese popular play, so that Grillparzer is here in touch with his own native tradition and has his feet on the ground. Medea is still the unsophisticated girl, and we see how she reacts to the flowery speech and high-flown gallantry of Phryxus. She listens in almost dogged silence and her only comment is, "Er spricht und spricht; Mir widert's," and we agree and suspect that Grillparzer has been reading Fouqué's courtly romances.<sup>9</sup> But it is obvious from the rest of the play that Phryxus is meant to be taken seriously; in fact, his death was the motivation of the change in Medea. Further on, as the influence of the Viennese popular play is superseded by that of poetic drama, both Jason and Medea become theatrical; they talk too much and strike attitudes which are out

<sup>9</sup> Cf. the following references to Fouqué in the *Tagebücher* (Abt. II, Bd. 7) during the years 1817-20: No. 281, p. 125; No. 591, p. 235; No. 776, p. 296; No. 825, p. 314; also two letters by Schreyvogel to Grillparzer, *Briefe*, Abt. III, Bd. 1, pp. 193 and 205. Cf. also Bd. 4, p. 24, in S. Hock's edition of Grillparzer's *Werke*, 16 Teile (Bong, Berlin): "—dem von Schreyvogel über Verdienst gepriesenen Fouqué, dessen 'Sigurd der Schlagentöter' er [Grillparzer] während der Arbeit an der Trilogie las."

of proportion to the situation, and this weakens the motivation of the final catastrophe.

Grillparzer, in his desire to link the characters psychologically with the plot after the fashion of character tragedy, aims to arouse pity for Medea by stressing Jason's cruelty. She is forsaken, and the murder of her children is to be motivated by her despair and complete disillusionment. But Jason, under the influence of his own rhetoric, becomes a monster of egoism, and the victim of a monster is not a tragic figure; indeed, we feel Medea would be well rid of such a husband. Her desperate deed seems rather the act of an hysterical woman dramatizing herself as a murderess. As such, she is a forerunner of Hofmannsthal's hysterical heroines who do not know what they are doing; but whereas Hofmannsthal's Klytämnestra cannot remember her deed, Medea exults in hers, and is later too much taken up with condemning Jason and voicing disillusionment and the vanity of all things to feel horror or remorse at what she has done.

*Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen*, the last of the five plays to be written, is the most realistic of the classical plays, and therefore largely free from the uncertainty visible in the language and characterization of *Das Goldene Vließ*. Nevertheless, Grillparzer's conflict with the literary ideals he had set for himself is still apparent in the presentation of values. The humanistic ideals of German classicism, particularly the idealism of Kantian philosophy, which affirms the sublimity of obeying the Categorical Imperative, also the idea of romantic love as it is found in Shakespeare and Racine, appear in a dubious light. The conflict is between love and duty, between the lovers on the one hand and on the other, the Priest, whom Grillparzer intended to be the agent of divine justice. But the perspective wavers between the rights of the lovers and the equally justified claims of the Priest. Love, which according to normal experience beautifies life and is explicitly said to do so in certain lyrical passages of the play, has the opposite effect on the lovers. It makes them proud and contemptuous. For example, Hero is unnecessarily offhand with the Watchman and sarcastic with her uncle, the Priest, in Act IV, thus antagonizing the one and confirming the other in his suspicions. The Priest, although he extols in a fine poetic speech the quietistic ideal of *Sammlung* and withdrawal from the world, is little more than the upholder of a barren and loveless moral code, nor is he free from malice. The death of the lovers is thus not inevitably tragic, for it is as much the Priest's personal responsibility as the result of their own willful indifference. Grillparzer wavers here between the claims of love and duty as he sees them, and is attracted and repelled by each in turn.

The three classical plays are character dramas, i.e., they deal with people we could imagine meeting even though their behavior might strike us as theatrical. They thus give the impression of life, and as



such belong to a type of organic literature. But the incongruities I have noted remain, namely (1) the subjective pessimism in all three plays, (2) theatrical characters presented as normal, (3) false rhetoric, (4) faulty motivation, all mainly in *Das Goldene Vließ*, and lastly (5) the uncertainty in the presentation of values in *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen*.

Now if we examine the two historical plays, which were written between *Das Goldene Vließ* and *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen*, we do not find these incongruities. What had there been out of focus, subjective, false, or uncertain, now appears in perspective. In fact, the uncertainty which is a flaw in the two classical plays now becomes a function of form in the historical plays. In the classical plays the subjective pessimism had claimed universal validity by its predominance in the many elegiac passages and also by the organic nature of the form, which gave the illusion of life. There is, however, no such claim in the historical plays, for not only are there fewer impassioned speeches, but the form of both these plays is unrealistic, so that what is subjective is artistically presented as such and therefore acceptable.

The story of *König Ottokars Glück und Ende* might be that of a tragedy by Shakespeare or Schiller. On the surface it is reminiscent of *Wallenstein*, and as the tragedy of a supposedly great but ambitious man it has been much criticized. Ottokar is the favorite candidate for the imperial throne, and ostensibly his failure to be elected Holy Roman Emperor and his final defeat and death are the result of his guilt in divorcing his first wife, Margarete. Viewed as a character tragedy one might be tempted to ask with Scherer<sup>10</sup> "warum ihm alle diese Kronen zufallen" and to question the motivation of his *Gewissensbisse* in the fifth act. But there is no attempt at psychological motivation either in the presentation of Ottokar's success or in the events which symbolize his fall. Grillparzer does not rely on the inner logic of action to convince, but on the actuality of the presentation, which is a series of tableaux, of vivid, often brief, scenes showing us what is happening. The action of the play is propelled not by the characters, but, as it were, by the artist by means of this new technique. Thus there is no need to link the characters psychologically with the action, and Grillparzer can dispense with the motivation which had proved a pitfall in *Das Goldene Vließ*.

So too the rhetorical language, under the influence of which in *Das Goldene Vließ* he had become too personally involved in his characters, so that we saw them dramatize themselves into false attitudes, is either absent or under control. Thus Margarete, who at first sight might be taken to be a martyred heroine in the Schillerian tradition, indulges in a long speech and uses theatrical imagery. She is apparently the suffering and heroically dignified victim of Otto-

<sup>10</sup> *Vorträge und Aufsätze zur Geschichte des geistigen Lebens in Deutschland und Oesterreich* (Berlin, 1874), p. 246.



kar's cruel wrong and has undoubtedly a right to lament her fate; but when we examine her speeches and observe her behavior, we find she is a sophist<sup>11</sup> and a tiresome selfish woman. She has never loved Ottokar, admits she is a joyless creature and that she would not have borne him children even if she could; indeed, she is happy only when morbidly dwelling on the memory of her first husband and is now really pleased to go and spend the rest of her life worshipping at his tomb. She is supported in her lamentations by Rudolf of Hapsburg, who later becomes Emperor; at the beginning of the play he is a humble nobleman, law-abiding and filled with a strong sense of duty. Like the Priest in *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen*, he appears as the personification of obedience to the moral law. But he is too good to be true: his stuffy concern for the Queen and his censorious attitude toward Ottokar are not free from priggishness and self-righteousness.

But both Margarete and Rudolf and all the other characters who are prigs or shams, parading ideals and attitudes for which no corresponding fate or human greatness fits them, are put in perspective by the most interesting and fascinating character in the first part of the play. It is Zawisch, one of Ottokar's retainers, who with his jeering "Ha Ha" and ribald mockery of everyone and everything including himself, passes the only true judgment on such a world of egoism, empty ideals, and false rhetoric. Thus he pokes fun at Rudolf's sanctimonious rectitude and Margarete's affected piety. He also ridicules the blusterings of his kinsmen, whose air of affronted dignity and revengeful rage at Ottokar's divorce is entirely unwarranted. For had not they themselves been plotting the break-up of Ottokar's marriage in the hope of a royal alliance with one of their daughters? Though Zawisch is instrumental in Ottokar's downfall, he is not the serious plotter of character tragedy, who is motivated by revenge; nor is he just the type of amusing *bon vivant*<sup>12</sup> culled from the Viennese popular play. He is rather the jeering jester, akin to the *hohnlachender Narr*<sup>13</sup> Grillparzer felt at his side at times, mocking and destroying the world as he saw it, without either personal malice or serious intent.

It is a debunking process, and the first half of the play is akin to parody in the spirit of the Viennese popular play. Ottokar, too, by his sturdy naturalness helps in the debunking; he is a man of action, and we share his breezy indifference to the solemn eulogies made to him in the first act by the various dignitaries. Thus the Bürgermeister, eager to continue his rhetorical address:

Großmächtigster! Unüberwindlichster!  
Es drang zu uns die Fama deines Siegs,  
Und—

<sup>11</sup> Although Staiger (*op. cit.*, pp. 243-44) finds the casuistry of Margarete's argument "befremdend," he offers no criticism of her character.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Staiger (*op. cit.*, p. 233): "Eine Figur wie Zawisch etwa ähnelt wohl auf den ersten Blick dem Bonvivant der Vorstadt Bühnen."

<sup>13</sup> *Tagebücher*, No. 1615, Abt. II, Bd. 8, p. 290.

is cut short by Ottokar, and dumbfounded further by the brisk command to help him off with his boots. These debunking scenes are half comic, particularly the love scene between Zawisch and Kunigunde, when Zawisch mocks himself as the romantic lover. Grillparzer is here no longer half deluded by the ideal of romantic love as in *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen*. That the debunking of his romantic ideals is important is shown by the attention given to this episode, for it takes up half of the second act, where it is at times visibly the main interest: thus Zawisch's absurd and daring game with Kunigunde's ribbon stands out like a grotesque detail enlarged, a close-up, against a background of what would be the main action in a character drama, namely, Ottokar at the back of the stage, discussing the defection of his vassals and giving orders for their arrest.

But the perspective is maintained not only by parody. On the more serious level, it is the unmasking of the hero Ottokar, who is brave, victorious, and powerful, only because he is unreflective, rash, and insensitive. Yet for all his faults Ottokar is an endearing character, fresh, full of aspiration, and with a naïve delight in the colorful things of life. We see him stride in in full armor to the throne room to receive homage from the many foreign dignitaries; his attention is caught by the peculiarly shaped sabres of the Tartars, and we delight in an interest so spontaneous and sincere, but are made aware of his limitations by the tactless remarks he then makes to the Tartars about their hair style. He is clearly not the hero encountered in the great tragedies of European literature; his power and greatness are purely external, and at times he is little more than a braggart. But no claim is made that he is other than we see him: though on the surface his fortune may rise in a crescendo in the first act, the very nature of this increase in prestige and power (the numerous processions and the trumpets heralding their approach) is stylized and external, a brilliant façade that is symbolical of Ottokar's show of greatness. It is followed by the outer collapse, one blow falling on another, and in the fourth act by Ottokar's inner collapse, depicting Grillparzer's fundamental view of man as a miserable sinner, for whom there is no hope in himself.

With Ottokar's humiliation, the climax or rather the lowest point of the play has been reached, for the historical plays are not tragedies and follow a different pattern. The erstwhile flamboyant Ottokar is now shown bereft of all his armor, dressed in somber black, and sitting like a beggar on the steps of his palace. As he sits huddled in despair, his remorse and repentance are made visible in a series of flashbacks, as it were, by the procession across the stage of all who had suffered at his hands: they are like shadows of his past flitting across his mind, visual reminders of his guilt turning his thoughts to God.

If in the first half of the play Zawisch's grotesque laughter had revealed the hollowness of the pomp and piety of a world of false

values, the only judge of this world of sinners in the latter part of the play is God. And so the play moves to the religious level. The tone of the last acts is not one of judgment and retribution, but of contrition and mercy, and as the religious note rises, Zawisch retreats into the background. He is seen again in the final tableau with all the remaining characters grouped around Rudolf, who as Emperor now appears as the divine representative of God on earth. And Ottokar, though defeated in battle, is spiritually redeemed, for he who had died as a beggar, bereft of all his glory and of any illusion about himself and the world, is found worthy of an imperial burial.

The play thus gives a dualistic view of life expressed in different ways. There is no immediate, whole, and rounded view, but a series of half views, each complementing the other. The exaggerated idealism of Margarete and Rudolf is balanced by Zawisch's irony, and this destructive view of life, culminating in the humiliation of Ottokar, is again balanced by the religious hierarchy, which in itself is a contrast of sinful man and God's mercy. This double perspective is in the spirit of the dual tradition of Austrian drama; in the first part of the play the parodistic tone of the Viennese popular play prevails, while the religious note of the last acts is reminiscent of the Baroque religious drama cultivated by the Jesuits in seventeenth-century Vienna.

The theme of Grillparzer's second historical play, *Ein treuer Diener seines Herrn*, is usually taken to be the sublimity of obeying the Categorical Imperative, and as such it has been found servile and unworthy of the tradition of heroic drama. Actually, like *König Ottokars Glück und Ende*, this play is a rejection of the inadequate ideals of style and values that had led Grillparzer astray in the classical plays, and in particular of his own subjective view of Kantian idealism, which had been presented so ambiguously in *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen*. It is also based on the same dualistic principle, present in the two main characters, Bancbanus and Otto, and in the contrast of different worlds, the inadequacy and vanity of which lead to the rise at the end of the play to the religious level. The inner form is less schematic, but the technique is the same, and the plot unfolds in a series of episodes which are packed with detail and movement.

The opening scene, depicting Bancbanus' domestic life, might be the beginning of a comedy, for the hero is almost a grotesque figure, fussing and scolding his servants as they dress him in his ceremonial regalia, while from without catcalls and jeers come up from a group of young gallants led by Otto. He is more obviously than Ottokar not the ideal hero, but rather the typical government servant of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire, meticulous in the performance of his duties, and so engrossed in routine details that he seems unaware of what is going on outside the narrow world of officialdom and his own domestic circle. But unlike Ottokar, he is willfully unreflective,

refusing to hear ill of Otto, the Queen's brother. It is as though he were trying to hedge himself in in a secure and limited world of devotion to the Royal House.

But he is not just the crotchety comic old man married to a young girl: the tenderness and beauty of his nature are apparent in his relations with his wife, and the gruff common sense and dry humor, evident in his dealings with the bewildered servants, show he is not a fool. His serenity in face of the insults from Otto and his friends is not just obtuseness. Indeed, there is humility and selflessness in his refusal to take notice of Otto, as though he felt that his young wife might well be attracted to the handsome prince and take pleasure in his attentions. But it is selflessness to a fault; and the ideal of quietism Grillparzer had formerly extolled in lyrical verse is judged here in Bancbanus. His self-denial approaches the inhuman self-abnegation of the saint who is possessed by his passion for God. Bancbanus is, however, not a saint, and what he worships is not God, but an ideal of duty embodied in the Royal House. His disillusionment, or rather his enlightenment, is the theme of the play: he learns that God alone is worthy of such devotion and sacrifice.

The tone of the next scene at court, when the King is ready to leave for one of his dependencies, is stylized and formal, contrasting with the bustle and confusion of the previous scene. It is conveyed in bare, almost ritualistic, language as the King appoints Bancbanus to preserve peace in his absence, threatening him with an ignominious memorial should he fail:

Er war ein Greis, und konnte sich nicht zügeln;  
 Er war ein Ungar, und vergaß der Treu;  
 Er war ein Mann, und hat nicht Wort gehalten!

The whole outline is clear, as in a medieval religious play, and we are reminded of a New Testament parable by the motif of the faithful servant and the departure of his master to a far country. It is, however, not a religious world, but one ruled by an ethical ideal of duty, for the King who forbids his people to kneel in his presence and loves only what he can respect is the personification of a moral law that is impersonal and immutable. He is not a person, as was the Priest in *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen*; he remains a figurehead in his rigidity and severity, and there is therefore no psychological incongruity in the characterization, nor is there any motivation of his choice. It is as though Bancbanus, who is so obviously limited, receives an impossible and arbitrary task from above. There is on the one hand the inhuman rigidity of the moral law and on the other the stunted life of the man who obeys it.

In Act II there is the further contrast of Bancbanus and the pageantry and gaiety of the court under the leadership of Otto—a vivid contrast that is again semi-religious and reminiscent of that between the fools and so-called wise of this world. But Bancbanus,

though he is wiser than the pleasure seekers who laugh at him, does not escape being ridiculous, so that neither of these spheres, that of duty or of pleasure, can pass judgment on the other. The absurdity and inadequacy of the whole is divided between the two sides; it is in the characters and the incidents: for example, the grotesque effect of the servants calling for more lemonade, while Banchanus pedantically carries on routine state business in the hall leading to the ballroom, where Otto and the courtiers are celebrating. There is no need of an ironical observer and commentator as provided by Zawisch in *König Ottokars Glück und Ende*.

Both the suicide of Banchanus' wife and the murder of the Queen are due more to chance than to tragic fate, for in the world as Grillparzer presents it in these plays, chance not tragic fate rules, and little attempt is made to link the characters with their actions or what happens to them. We see everything that happens and accept it—the Queen picks up Otto's cloak, and the dagger that is meant for him kills her instead. Grillparzer's view of man, however, evident in Banchanus and again in Otto, is ruthlessly analytical and pessimistic. Otto, though successful and blessed like Ottokar with nature's best gifts, is as selfish and self-willed as Banchanus is selfless. He is reminiscent of Jason in his egoism, but he is not presented as typical of mankind in general; nor is he judged by any character in the play, as Jason is explicitly judged and condemned by Medea, who is herself far from ideal, and whose judgment is therefore unconvincing, and indeed false, for one part cannot judge another. Judgment does not emerge from the inner development of the character's fate as in an organic play; it is passed, as it were, from outside, in the portrayal of Otto's collapse, for we see him suddenly reduced to animal stupor and cowardly fear by the shock of the suicide of Banchanus' wife. Kleist's Prinz Friedrich is also brought low by the fear of death, but his momentary collapse is justified by the situation; in fact, it serves to enhance him in our eyes when he overcomes his fear. Otto, however, is wholly responsible for what has happened, and his fit merely shows us what a miserable wretch he really is. He is degraded to the lowest level, and again it is by the vividness of the presentation that Grillparzer succeeds in making us accept Otto, who is visibly a psychological, if not a pathological, case.

Grillparzer's love of the theatrical, which in *Das Goldene Vließ* had frequently resulted in false rhetoric, is now used with artistic effect and is an integral part of his new technique. It finds expression in the setting, in the many pictorial effects and spectacular scenes, and if a character like Otto is theatrical, he is not meant to be anything else. He alone uses theatrical language and consciously so in his half-serious flattery of Banchanus' wife. The rest of the play is more distinguished by the lack of imagery than is *König Ottokars Glück und Ende*. The laconic verse, nervous and interspersed with colloquial phrases in the narrow world of Banchanus, formal and

bare in the austere legalistic world of the King, is suited to the subject.

With Erny's death and Otto's collapse the inner form of the play follows the same pattern as *König Ottokars Glück und Ende*. Bancbanus is a broken old man, whose silence is a more eloquent expression of grief than are many of Medea's rhetorical laments; he has indeed been punished for his obstinate devotion to the false god of duty. Otto literally appears as a beggar, barefoot and inarticulate in his wretchedness. The final scene, the return of the King, is symbolical of the religious note with which the play ends. It contrasts with the earlier scene depicting the King's departure, and as before various motifs and phrases are reminiscent of the New Testament and the parable of the faithful servant, but with a new significance. The King, who as the representative of a rigid law had been impatient of human weakness, now weeps over the city so torn by strife and bloodshed, and becomes almost a religious figure, receiving and pardoning Otto and the rebels who kneel before him. But he is not the divine representative of God on earth as was the Emperor at the end of *König Ottokars Glück und Ende*; and the play ends with a moving speech by Bancbanus, which is in itself a further example of the dualistic attitude behind the play, rounding it off and finally raising it to the religious level. Bancbanus turns his back on the world, refusing the honors now offered him for his loyalty. But his grief and disillusionment are not made absolute; falling on his knees before the King's small son, he hails him as the symbol of a future age when mercy and true justice shall at last reign among men.

The question now arises why Grillparzer finds in the historical plays a dramatic style which is unified and free from the discrepancies visible in the classical plays. It is true that the study of Shakespeare's historical plays encouraged him to rely more on visual aesthetic effect than on psychological motivation, and strengthened his belief that historical dramas, just because they dealt with *ein Wirkliches*,<sup>14</sup> as he put it, needed less careful motivation. He also added Lope de Vega to his literary models at the time of the historical plays, and Lope's influence, evident in the simpler verse and more plastic presentation, is likewise apparent in *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen*. Thus two of the difficulties he had encountered in the classical plays, i.e., motivation and rhetoric, could be avoided. This was in keeping with what he felt to be right, for not only were motivation and an elevated style foreign to the popular dramatic tradition in Austria, but he himself had an instinctive dislike of *eng-psychologischen Anreihen und Anfädeln*,<sup>15</sup> and he was no lover of *prächtigen Wortschwall*.<sup>16</sup> But though these two new influences helped him in this way, they do not wholly account for the change

<sup>14</sup> *Tagebücher*, No. 1400, Abt. II, Bd. 8, pp. 176-77.

<sup>15</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>16</sup> *Tagebücher*, No. 1626, Abt. II, Bd. 8, p. 296.



in his dramatic style, nor explain why the uncertainty visible in the classical plays is now balanced. I believe there were other reasons which were psychological and unconscious.

Both *König Ottokars Glück und Ende* and *Ein treuer Diener seines Herrn* deal with Austro-Hungarian history—about which Grillparzer felt passionately, for he was an ardent upholder of the dual monarchy and Empire. He was working here on his own ground and thus brought more into contact with his own roots, which were in Vienna and not in Weimar; from this vantage point he had a surer perspective of the ideals of content and style that he had tried to imitate in the classical plays. In addition, the enormous amount of study involved in the composition of *Ottokar* and *Diener* was salutary: the scanty material of the classical legends had given too much scope to his imagination, which he knew was not always reliable, but now he was very much engaged with the purely technical task of condensing his vast material.

Some of his difficulties as a poet sprang from the fact that he was very conscious of being a poet, particularly once his initial self-confidence had been shaken at the time of *Die Ahnfrau*; he felt himself to be the upholder of poetry in a prosaic and increasingly scientific age, and believed that it could be written only in a frenzy of inspiration. He has created this ideal of the divinely inspired poetess in *Sappho*, and one of the reasons why this play is practically free from the later uncertainty is that, next to *Die Ahnfrau*, it is his most spontaneous work. But it was an impossible ideal, and he has himself blamed broken inspiration and changes of mood for making *Das Goldene Vließ* and *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen* uneven. But because of this narrow conception of poetic inspiration, he regarded both *König Ottokar* and *Ein treuer Diener* with no great favor. *Ottokar* he described as "ein berechnetes Werk (ja berechnet, ins kleinste berechnet)," <sup>17</sup> and *Ein treuer Diener* was a play that had satisfied "kein inneres Bedürfnis." <sup>18</sup>

Both these plays are illustrations of two of Grillparzer's deepest convictions; and it is perhaps proof of their more allegorical nature that he summed up the content of *Ottokar* as "Uibermuth und sein Fall," <sup>19</sup> and that of *Ein treuer Diener* as "Der Heroismus der Pflicht-treue." <sup>20</sup> All his plays show that pride or self-will in its various manifestations is the basic characteristic of man, a subjective view that resulted from his predominantly analytical way of looking at life. His preoccupation with the concept of duty, though it was encouraged by his study of Kant, was equally a part of his own severely ethical nature and an inheritance from his stern pedantic father.

Thus both the historical plays are the result of concentrated effort; they are the product of the *Sammlung* he so often longs for and which

<sup>17</sup> *Tagebücher*, No. 1419, Abt. II, Bd. 8, p. 194.

<sup>18</sup> *Selbstbiographie*, Abt. I, Bd. 16, p. 204.

<sup>19</sup> *Tagebücher*, No. 612, Abt. II, Bd. 7, p. 241.

<sup>20</sup> *Selbstbiographie*, Abt. I, Bd. 16, p. 204.

he now attains indirectly. They are also presentations of convictions rather than of deeply felt experience such as is found in *Sappho*, and which appears again later in the greatest of his Austrian historical plays, *Ein Bruderkzwist in Habsburg*. But they are convictions maintained so passionately that he could externalize them, project them, as it were, and then observe and note every detail. Hence the new technique he evolves in the historical plays, with its externalization of what would be inner action in an organic work and the cramming of each episode and character with movement and liveliness so that there is always something happening, thus counteracting the lack of inner logic or life in the plot, is that of the artist who builds up his work mainly from the outside.<sup>21</sup>

With this accent on movement and visual effect and the flat-surface impression of many scenes, the technique is akin to film-technique. Grillparzer has stressed the vividness with which he saw his plays unfold before him on the stage. But it is not the ideal stage of the mind's eye of the dramatist who works organically, i.e., both inside and outside his work; rather, it is an imaginary theater, with all the props, lighting, and sound effects, of which Grillparzer makes skillful use. It is as though he were the producer, summoning the actors waiting in the wings and directing them what to do and say. And if the characters in the classical plays struck us as real people, but dressed up and playing a part, Ottokar and Bancbanus, Zawisch and Otto remain characters in a play, "wunderliche Charaktere" bordering on caricature, whom we would not expect to meet outside the theater, as we could imagine ourselves meeting a Hamlet or a Phèdre.

There is, therefore, no dichotomy in the historical plays between the characters and the part they play; they are unusual, but vividly alive as in a picture, and characterized with the greatest economy. Erny, though a secondary character, imprints herself on our memory with her ash-blond hair, pale face, and the imperturbable appraising stare of her blue eyes. Her final remark to her maid, "Komm, komm! Wir wollen noch ein Stündchen schlafen," made at the end of the first scene with Otto and his companions still racketing outside the house, throws light on her character, her contented marriage with an old man, and Otto's angry infatuation for her: a woman of unusual beauty, as cool and keen on her creature comforts as a well-groomed cat and as tantalizing in her self-assurance, which is yet that of a child hiding her timidity and helplessness even from herself.

"Im ganzen ist der Stil eines Schriftstellers ein treuer Abdruck seines Innern,"<sup>22</sup> said Goethe, and the description given above of the characters in the historical plays as actors taking their cues from the producer corresponds to Grillparzer's tendency, as he laments in his

<sup>21</sup> Cf. "Er ist aussen," in the chapter on Grillparzer's language by W. Naumann, *Grillparzer: Das dichterische Werk* (Stuttgart, 1956), p. 6.

<sup>22</sup> Eckermann, *Gespräche*, April 14, 1824.



diary, "die Menschen nur als Figuren einer Komödie zu betrachten, die nur durch ihre Übereinstimmung oder Nichtübereinstimmung mit der Idee anziehen und abstoßen, ohne Rücksicht darauf, daß sie ein lebendes Selbst sind, mit Leiden und Freuden, mit Willen und Gemüth."<sup>23</sup>

The new predominantly visual style, marking a partial return to the style of *Die Ahnfrau*, and the twofold form of the historical plays are the mediums of Grillparzer's dualistic attitude and the uncertainty that resulted from it. He has described himself as a dual personality: "In mir leben zwei völlig abgesonderte Wesen. Ein Dichter von der übergreifendsten, ja sich überstürzenden Phantasie und ein Verstandesmensch der kältesten und zähesten Art."<sup>24</sup> The shock following *Die Ahnfrau* had led to the conflict between his own tradition and temperament and the literary ideals he had set for himself. It may also have released an inner conflict, for we find the first sign of a conflict between reflection and feeling in Sappho's lament about "quälendes Erkennen," and in Phaon's bewilderment at the change wrought in himself by Sappho's love for him: up till then he had been able to unravel his "verworrene Empfindung," "bis klar es als Erkennen vor mir lag," whereas now he finds himself befogged and in "quälende Verwirrung."

What is here expressed in the monologues of Sappho and Phaon is part of the human problem in the play; it is a conflict and confusion experienced by the characters, deceiving them in their love and thus creating the tragic situation. It is therefore given form. But this is not so in *Das Goldene Vließ* and *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen*, for there is little or no awareness of this inner conflict in the minds of the characters—in fact, most of them are particularly single-minded—yet it is not therefore absent. Instead it appears as confusion within the form, so that we see Grillparzer identifying himself either consciously or unconsciously with individual characters and motifs. In the two historical plays, however, there is no confusion either in the minds of the characters or in the form, but rather a clear-cut presentation of dualism, now equally divided between the two main characters, between the "naïve" who do not know themselves (Ottokar, Otto) and their opposites who do (Zawisch, Banchanus), and who directly or indirectly bring about the others' downfall and self-realization. Just as in *Die Ahnfrau* Grillparzer had presented his romantic pessimism impersonally by remaining outside it, he now projects his inner conflict and by so doing he can present it evenly and objectively. This conflict was to continue throughout Grillparzer's life, for we find it dramatized in varying forms and degrees not only in the early part of his career in *König Ottokar* and *Ein treuer Diener* and in the characters of Rustan and Zanga in *Der Traum, ein Leben*, but also in the post-

<sup>23</sup> *Tagebücher*, No. 1613, Abt. II, Bd. 8, p. 289.

<sup>24</sup> *Selbstbiographie*, Abt. I, Bd. 16, p. 135.

humorous historical plays, e.g., Alphons and Rahel in *Die Jüdin von Toledo* and Rudolf and Don Cesar in *Ein Bruderkzwist in Habsburg*.

Grillparzer says of himself, "Es sind zwei Seelen in mir. Die eine ist empört, daß die andere so unempfindlich ist."<sup>25</sup> But though he uses the Goethean phrase for dualism, a study of all these plays, would, I believe, show that his is not the dualism of Goethe; it is rather a definite split, the *Zerrissenheit* we associate with Heine and E. T. A. Hoffmann, with two halves attracted by and warring against each other, until one is vanquished and the peace of an ideal world prevails, whether it be the religious hierarchy at the end of *Ottokar* or the idyllic pastoral realm in *Der Traum, ein Leben*. Such a split would account for the flat-surface effect of his plays, the lack of thickness despite the predominantly sensuous appeal noted by F. Nolte in his remarks on Grillparzer.<sup>26</sup> Whereas Goethe, the organic artist, is wholly one, both mind and feeling, with each of his dual personalities, only one side of Grillparzer is present at a time in his main characters, while the minor characters lack complexity and may be figureheads like the King in *Ein treuer Diener* or even puppets, e.g., Lucretia in *Ein Bruderkzwist*.

The two conflicts in Grillparzer, that between the various literary influences he was subject to and that within himself, conditioned and aggravated the other, resulting in a dilemma of uncertainty between what he saw and willed with his conscious mind and what he felt and did instinctively. Where he fails to maintain the balance between the different factions, the effect is one-sided as in *Das Goldene Vließ*, which he tends to swamp with his romantic pessimism, or else the perspective is uneven as in *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen*. But when under the influence of his material and the concentration necessary to master it, as in the two early historical plays, he succeeds in stabilizing his personality in two main characters, the perspective is sure. He does not give the God's-eye-view of the organic artist, but the pessimism he felt on the one hand—whereby, as in *Ottokar*, life seemed to him a grotesque game of deluded egoists, or as in *Ein treuer Diener* a pitiful comedy of limited human beings paying allegiance to false gods because they can see no other—is balanced by his sense of man's guilt and the instinctive hope of something approaching a religious miracle that alone could transform and save the world as he saw it. This interpretation of a dual attitude of despair and hope in Grillparzer is borne out not only by the two early historical plays, but also by his posthumous plays, especially *Ein Bruderkzwist in Habsburg*, where the hero is the personification of this unhappy dilemma. It is further supported by the autobiographical writings, where he is acutely aware of himself and ruthlessly analytical. But because of this self-awareness he could

<sup>25</sup> *Tagebücher*, No. 1736, Abt. II, Bd. 8, p. 341.

<sup>26</sup> Grillparzer, Lessing, and Goethe in *The Perspective of European Literature* (Lancaster, Pa., 1938), p. 47.

observe his pessimism: he knew he was a hypochondriac and that the tendency to see only the dark side of life made him no true judge of its value and purpose. He was not happy in his pessimism, both from a sense of social responsibility and the feeling that he himself was at fault and that life was really good.

Grillparzer has written many plays, but he is most successful and individual in the two early historical plays and in the posthumous plays, where he further develops the presentation of his dualistic attitude. He thus finds the appropriate terms for his dilemma and a dramatic style that combines the various literary traditions he inherited. By evolving a dramatic style that is in some respects akin to film-technique and presenting an uncertainty that is caught between meaninglessness and the hope of hope, he is not only individual; indeed, *König Ottokars Glück und Ende* and *Ein treuer Diener seines Herrn* might be said to be modern in form and theme, so that Byron's prophecy "I know him not—but ages will" is perhaps nearer fulfillment than has been supposed in the past.

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## CURDS AND LIONS IN *DON QUIJOTE* A STUDY OF CHAPTER 17, BOOK II

By JAMES H. BRODERICK and HUBERT L. DREYFUS

Chapter 17, Book II, affords one kind of critic immediate, compelling evidence of the satiric currents of *Don Quijote*. Cide Hamete, for instance, reminds the critic that the Don's sword is "no de las del perrillo cortadoras."<sup>1</sup> And in seventeenth-century Spain, unfortunately, lions only come caged, on dusty public roads. On that dusty road Don Quijote does not face the real danger of a fight with a lion, only the lion's shaggy behind. Even then, Cervantes' wiser and sadder knight feels it necessary to pay the carter and the lionkeeper for the interruption and to ask the lionkeeper to attest "en la mejor forma que pudieses lo que aquí me has visto hacer . . ." (pp. 347-48).

Although the critic can thus immediately respond to the continuing satiric contrast between the world of chivalric romances and Don Quijote's tarnished, uneventful, increasingly bourgeois world, such a response to the realistic satire may run the risk of oversimplifying the novel. The literal-mindedness of one nineteenth-century critic and editor, for example, resulted in what was for him a necessary rearrangement of the text of *Don Quijote*. In his 1863 edition Juan Eugenio Hartzenbusch had prefaced Chapter 17, Book II, with the following sentences lifted from another part of the novel:

Llegando el autor desta grande historia a contar lo que en este capítulo cuenta, dice que quisiera pasarle en silencio, temeroso de que no había de ser creído; porque las locuras de don Quijote llegaron aquí al término y raya de las mayores que pueden imaginarse, y aun pasaron dos tiros de ballesta más allá de las mayores. Finalmente, aunque con este miedo y recelo, las escribió de la misma manera que él las hizo. . . (p. 197)

In the first edition of *Don Quijote* this bit of "historical" fencing had prefaced Chapter 10, Book II, in which Sancho convinces the Don that a peasant girl is the enchanted señora Dulcinea. Nevertheless Ormsby, in his 1885 translation, followed Hartzenbusch's rearrangement, and his objectivist line of reasoning is worth recalling:

It would be absurd to call Don Quixote's simplicity in the matter of Sancho's mystification about the village girls, mad doings (*locuras*) that go beyond the maddest that can be conceived; while the lion adventure is all through treated as his very maddest freak; one compared with which, as Sancho says, all the rest were "cakes and fancy bread."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *El ingenioso hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha*, ed. F. Rodríguez Marín, IV (Madrid, 1928), 343. All quotations from *D.Q.* in this article are taken from this volume.

<sup>2</sup> John Ormsby, trans., *The Ingenious Gentleman Don Quixote of La Mancha* (New York, 1885), III, 188.

Hartzenbusch and Ormsby assumed, along with Sancho, that madness is primarily rashness (that is, the pursuit of absurd possibilities in the face of the limitations which reality imposes), and that Don Quijote's challenge of the caged lion in Chapter 17 was the extreme instance of his madness. For these men the chivalric enchantment of realistic phenomena was only mystification, simplicity, not madness. They see the protagonist as the agent of entertaining and foolish exploits; the adventure with the lions is the most absurd, the most dangerous, and requires some introductory notice. Hartzenbusch and Ormsby thus provide one statement of the objectivist, common-sense view of the Don and his adventure with the lions.

Sancho's part in the chapter, however, provides the clearest expression of this view. After the other spectators have failed, Sancho, with tears in his eyes, tries to dissuade Don Quijote from challenging the lions:

—Mire, señor—decía Sancho—,que aquí no hay encanto ni cosa que lo valga; que yo he visto por entre las verjas y resquicios de la jaula una uña de león verdadero, y saco por ella que el tal león cuya debe de ser la tal uña es mayor que una montaña. (p. 341)

A lion's claw can convince Sancho of real danger. To him this menace, because present and visible, is greater than any suggested by windmills on the plain or by the noise of fulling mills. Because of this empirically known claw, Sancho and Hartzenbusch, Ormsby, and the prudent Don Diego de Miranda would accept as literally true Cervantes' heading for this chapter: "el último punto y extremo adonde llegó y pudo llegar el inaudito ánimo de don Quijote. . . ." They are forced by their literal-mindedness to declare this the most serious episode among all the silly adventures. For them the chapter heading is not ironic, and this adventure is the Don's greatest, albeit rashest, moment.

Yet Don Quijote himself, who always offers the most serious interpretation of each adventure, finds this adventure unexceptional. Satisfied that these caged beasts are only the king's lions, he asks, "Y ¿son grandes los leones?" (The "Y" indicates the casualness of his interest.) The lions are reported to be both big and hungry. "A lo que dijo don Quijote, sonriéndose un poco: —¿Leoncitos a mí? ¿A mí leoncitos, y a tales horas?" (p. 337). In his role as a conquering knight he is executing Chaplinesque flourishes, like the Tramp's jaunty twirling of his walking stick before an appallingly close and nearly crushing onslaught. He betrays a slight smile, for these caged beasts are only lion cubs to him; and with superb irrelevancy he deplores a break in his day, which presumably accommodates lion fighting at another hour. After watching him show "maravilloso denuedo y corazón valiente" "paso ante paso" (p. 342), we realize how unexceptional this adventure is for him. The Don obviously would find a singular irony in the heading of this chapter.

Noting the hero's studied and flamboyant casualness, the subiec-

tivist critic, for whom Don Quijote always provides the clue to the novel's values, must claim that this adventure is not a serious exception among comic situations. He must indeed claim that the objectivist critics are wrong and that this adventure is routine. The objectivists do not understand the Don's heroism in all the adventures, and thereby his strong claim on our sympathy. For the subjectivist, the full significance of the lions episode is focused in Don Quijote's definition of courage. Only after the "felicemente" conclusion of the adventure of the lions does the Don take time to counter Don Diego's assertion that courage involves a prudent respect for the limits of a calculated risk. As convincing as Sancho and Don Diego have been, more persuasive is the long and ringing *apologia* of the careless protagonist:

...mejor parece, digo, un caballero andante socorriendo a una viuda en algún despoblado que un cortesano caballero requebrando a una doncella en las ciudades. ... Yo, pues, como me cupo en suerte ser uno del número de la andante caballería, no puedo dejar de acometer todo aquello que a mí me pareciere que cae debajo de la jurisdicción de mis ejercicios; y así, el acometer los leones que ahora acometé derechamente me tocaba, puesto que conocí ser temeridad esorbitante, porque bien sé lo que es valentía, que es una virtud que está puesta entre dos extremos viciosos, como son la cobardía y la temeridad... y en esto de acometer aventuras, créame vuesa merced, señor don Diego, que antes se ha de perder por carta de más que de menos, porque mejor suena en las orejas de los que lo oyen "el tal caballero es temerario y atrevido" que nó "el tal caballero es tímido y cobarde." (pp. 351-52)

With its display of self-knowledge that is characteristic of the Don in the second book, this speech is a full and climactically placed answer to Don Diego's prudence. In a knight, at least, courage is not to be defined by the prospects of success or by results. Though the action is rash, Don Quijote claims that the mere exercise of courage is its own justification.

The difference between the objectivist view and Don Quijote's view of courage is all important. To Sancho, surely, courage is one response to danger and danger is objective. But the Don's nonchalance in this adventure indicates that whether we think the lions real or imaginary, no special display of courage is here required; and, as we remember, he does not respond very differently to giants, armies, knights, or lions: he seems, in fact, to alternate between eagerness and this pose of indifference. His imperturbability denies the intensity of danger as a determining factor in the courage of an act. His courage depends neither on the objectivity of the danger nor on its intensity, whether objective or subjective, but is somehow an attribute of his being. That he is courageous becomes obvious to us once we remember that he is a knight. His courage was initially dependent only on his being a knight; it is never dependent on anything external. Once he has left Alonso Quijano behind, the errant Don Quijote de la Mancha knows quite simply that he is courageous. It is this "inward" conviction, then, that appears as

nonchalance in the adventure of the lions.

Hartzenbusch and Sancho are right, however, in recognizing the importance of this adventure, for here we as observers are given a unique opportunity to gauge Don Quijote against opponents who are neither hallucinations nor impersonations. This adventure with the lions asserts the crucial difference between the Don and a figure like Walter Mitty, who acts courageously only in his daydreams: Walter Mitty's resistance to his real wife's ferocity is both passive and furtive. Because of the "Aventura de los Leones," we can appreciate fully the difference between the Don's inwardness and Walter Mitty's intermittent subjectivism. Don Quijote knows that he *is* courageous; Walter Mitty believes that he could be courageous, but only *dreams* that he is.

Yet although Hartzenbusch and Sancho thus understand the importance of this adventure, they nonetheless fail to understand the importance of all Don Quijote's adventures and thus think this one exceptional. This objectivist point of view and Hartzenbusch's rearrangement of the text, in particular, would oversimplify the novel. The drastic limitation of the objectivist view becomes fully apparent when it is compared to an extreme subjectivist interpretation. W. H. Auden, for example, championing the Don, completely inverts the objectivist emphasis on reality.<sup>3</sup> Far from simplifying the hero, as Hartzenbusch did, Auden radically stresses the importance of the Don's "inwardness." Instead of this adventure with the lions, Auden claims that the most unbelievable episode in the novel is Dulcinea's enchantment (from which Hartzenbusch borrowed the introduction). For Auden Don Quijote's greatest moment occurs when he convinces himself that a peasant girl is Dulcinea, that is, when his will overcomes the disparity between the ideal possibility of Dulcinea and the coarse reality of the girl Sancho has stopped. Whereas Hartzenbusch and Sancho found the ultimate test of the Don's greatness in his facing the tangible, objective lion, Auden finds greatness in Don Quijote's dismissing as irrelevant the girl's awkward reality. The Don's conviction about himself and his ideal possibility are independent of the reality of seventeenth-century Spain, its peasant girls and its caged lions. His will alone keeps that conviction and that possibility alive. Hartzenbusch's question, "Si tres veces se había tenido él por encantado, ¿era extraño que una creyesse encantada á la señora de sus pensamientos?"<sup>4</sup> indicates how little he values Don Quijote's commitment to knighthood which Dulcinea has come to symbolize. In contrast, Auden's emphasis on the Don's difficult and crucial struggle for an ideal possibility provides a perspective in which the novel can approach the tragic; but like Hartzenbusch's objectivist view, it too accounts for only a part of the hero's literary presentation.

<sup>3</sup> W. H. Auden, "The Ironie Hero," *The Third Hour* (1949).

<sup>4</sup> *La Primera Edición del Ingenioso Hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha...*, reproducida en facsimile (Barcelona, 1874), III, 125.



Chapter 17 contains, in fact, not only the adventure of the lions but also some preliminary byplay with Sancho and a pail of curds. When forced to dispose of the curds he has been eating, Sancho dumps them into the Don's helmet. Unaware of its contents, Don Quijote claps it onto his head:

y como los requesones se apretaron y exprimieron, comenzó a correr el suero por todo el rostro y barbas de don Quijote. . . .

—¿Qué será esto, Sancho, que parece que se me ablandan los cascos, o se me derriren los sesos, o que sudo de los pies a la cabeza? . . . Dame, si tienes, con que me limpie; que el copioso sudor me ciega los ojos. (pp. 334-35)

His inability to distinguish impossibility from possibility is once again comic. Here his madness is only momentary; he immediately abandons a mad explanation about melting brains for a mistaken explanation that he is sweating. When he later sees the white clots, he correctly rebukes Sancho for putting curds in his helmet. Although the whole curds incident is thus simple and brief, Cervantes reminds us of it when the cloth used to wipe up the curds reappears atop Don Quijote's lance as a signal for "los huidos y ausentes" (p. 348) to return. And Don Diego introduces even the Don's *apologia* with this reference to the curds:

"¿Qué más locura puede ser que ponerse la celada llena de requesones y darse a entender que le ablandaban los cascos los encantadores? Y ¡qué mayor temeridad y disparate que querer pelear por fuerza con leones?" (p. 350)

The fact that Cervantes keeps associating the curds and the lions in this chapter suggests something more deliberate than an inability to sustain the serious, something more serious than a determination to get a laugh at all costs.

In the lions episode, as in the second book generally, reality has offered Don Quijote chivalric opportunities: real lions which he can challenge do appear before him. His imagination no longer has to create opponents to sustain an adventure, and more and more of Cervantes' attention falls on the Don's reactions and conduct within these given situations. The lions episode, as we have seen, focuses sharply on Don Quijote's courage, his inwardness. In the curds incident, on the other hand, the focus is on the discomfiture of the hero and the absurdity of the explanation that he offers. The curds incident is the lowest form of the repeated jokes based on the Don's inability to admit that reality limits possibility, to see that in his case a melting brain is impossible. Whereas the adventure with the lions signally involved Don Quijote's whole chivalric being, Cervantes could have had the curds incident happen to any clown in the novel.

What Auden neglected, as did Hartzenbusch with different results, is the fact that Cervantes sets the Don in situations that are always a mixture of curds and lions. It is right, generally, to think of the adventure of the windmills as the prototype for all Don Quijote's exploits, especially those in the first book. In the adventure of the



windmills the Don interprets the appearance of huge forms against the horizon as evidence of the presence of giants, who, according to his profession, must be attacked and defeated. The lions and the curds are each one half of this windmills prototype. If the lions adventure is a refinement, a distillation of the professional, chivalric aspect of the windmills adventure, the curds incident is a reduction of the madness aspect of that same archetypal adventure. What would be incongruous from the subjectivist point of view is that in the second book, when Cervantes deleted from the adventures proper most of the jokes about the Don's mad interpretation of appearances (although the joke still works, but now, by reverse English, against the Duke and Duchess, Sanson Carrasco, etc.), the author should reintroduce the old joke, now in a cruder and separate form as in the curds incident.

After the complexity of Don Quijote's theatrical adventures, and the exciting concentration of his inwardness, the reappearance of the simple joke must be deliberate. The curds and the lions are, in fact, both essential to the view of his hero that Cervantes continues to present. Don Quijote's imagination, which can demand that he uncage the king's lions, has no sure way of distinguishing curds from brains. The curds are an obvious reminder that he is mad, that he ignores reality. (And neither the Greek hero who was dependent on *areté* nor the inward saint who waited for a vocation ever ignored reality.) Such ignorance is properly the subject of comedy; a man cannot dream himself into a hero or a saint, but only into a clown. Cervantes expects the reader to understand that in facing the lions Don Quijote is an objective hero; that in minimizing the importance of a real test of courage, he is an inward hero;<sup>6</sup> and that in mistaking curds for brains, he is a fool.

Although the curds and the lion's shaggy behind thus proclaim the impossibility of the Don's being a knight and the folly of his attempts, subjectivist critics persist in ignoring these aspects of the novel. For them, the true, the heroic, the Nietzschean, or the Christlike Don Quijote appears only in the importance of the impossibility to which he has committed himself; all other details are the result of blindness or compromise on the author's part. For them, because the possibility of becoming whatever you want to be is important, Cervantes is betraying his hero when he fails to treat as tragic the Don's defeat as a knight. Yet Cervantes' peculiar combination of lions and curds is not the product of blindness. In this profoundly consistent novel, the hero's failure cannot be tragic; the novelist's practice of his art prevents it.

Cervantes' combination of lions and curds is, in fact, the gift of his

<sup>6</sup> The phrase "inward hero," of course, contains a contradiction, for "inward" involves only the relation of man to himself and/or to his God, while "hero" involves the whole Greek climate of acclamation, public performance, trophies, etc. The peculiar fact that Don Quijote lives out this contradiction in Book II creates the prevailing pathos of that book.

art, the art of the realistic storyteller. That happily generic and now extinct profession was succinctly described by Vyacheslav Ivanov when he recalled the incredible detachment and diffuse interest of the first novelists:

The joy of the story teller—the self-sufficing pleasure in invention of adventures and surprising entanglements, in the many-coloured tapestry of overlapping and interlocking situations—at one time this was the novelist's professed main object. And it seemed to him that in this pleasure the epic narrator could find himself entirely anew; carefree, loquacious, inexhaustible, inventive, without any particular desire—or indeed, real ability—to find the moral of his story.<sup>6</sup>

It is to this profession that Cervantes certainly belongs. Despite Ivanov's condescension toward the early novelists' failure to exploit the moral, the subjective, the Dostoevskian potentialities of their stories, he has clearly described Cervantes' kind of realistic art.

As in the *Divina Commedia* or the *Comédie Humaine*, the author takes pleasure in variety, in God's plentiful realization of possibility. Whether cataloguing the features of the luckless Maritornes or counterpointing Don Quijote's objective and inward heroism against his delusion about the curds, Cervantes is admiring reality. Neither an objectivist nor a subjectivist, Cervantes finds that while the discrepancy between reality and possibility can afford either comedy or tragedy, this discrepancy itself is dissolved in a more complete reality, a reality which in its varied and often grotesque embodiment of possibilities is itself satisfying. Within the reality of *Don Quijote* the pathos of the hero's failure as a knight does not swell into tragedy because his commitment to being a knight-errant is simply a mistake, like thinking that curds are brains; and although his mistake about being a knight is not so quickly and easily rectified as was his confusion about the curds, it is still a mistake which reality in its benign intransigence will gradually correct. The Don's painfully funny return to reality is not simply a series of comic collisions with reality nor a mounting tragic disillusionment, but the process through which reality with its own opportunities for struggle, failure, and success justly asserts its own completeness.

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<sup>6</sup> *Freedom and the Tragic Life*, trans. Norman Cameron (London, 1952), p. 9.

## LOVE IN THE PROSE FICTION OF GOBINEAU

By LOUIS TENENBAUM

Gobineau has justly been recognized as the successor to Stendhal and Mérimée, the outstanding representatives of *la tradition sèche* in nineteenth-century prose fiction. In all three writers a literary technique of extreme sobriety and economy overlays a romanticism of varied depth and extent, but having in common an admiration for moral aristocracy as it is expressed in energy and power of the will. All three have, accordingly, been considered in some measure as precursors of Nietzsche. Love as a manifestation of energetic individualism has an important role in Stendhal and Gobineau, but Mérimée's pessimism prevented his treatment of the theme with the implicit idealism of the other two. Stendhal and Gobineau, on the other hand, were quite capable of leaving aside their idealism to depict, like Mérimée, the ridicule and dishonesty of insincere sentimental relationships. Unlike Stendhal, however, Gobineau had an emotional rather than rational attitude toward politics and political man, and for his fiction, therefore, love has come to have a primary function.

Gobineau realized this, perhaps unconsciously, for his most important work of fiction, *Les Pléiades*, which was conceived as a politico-philosophical novel and whose early chapters illustrate this conception, changes emphasis, in midstream as it were, and becomes a lyrical apotheosis of love. Gobineau's idealization of love, most cogently depicted in *Les Pléiades*, published in 1874, can be traced back as far as 1847, the date of the *nouvelle* "Mademoiselle Irnois." Already in that work the concept that true passion does not demand reciprocity, that it can exist in un nourished purity with no hope of fulfillment, makes valid the heroine's love for the unsuspecting *ébéniste*.<sup>1</sup> Alain confirms this impression with a remark apropos of Emmelina Irnois. "Je retiens encore d'Emmelina ce trait que l'idée ou l'espoir d'être aimée en retour . . . ne lui vient pas du tout. . . . On aime de soi, mais on n'aime pas soi; mais plutôt on est soi par l'amour d'un autre."<sup>2</sup> "Mademoiselle Irnois" is an extraordinary work when considered in the light of Gobineau's later stories; the ennobling influence of a true passion is granted to a creature possessing none of the aristocracy of spirit which he was so careful to insist upon after the publication of *L'Essai sur l'Inégalité des Races humaines*. It is an indication that in 1847 he was closer to the influence of the Stendhal who had once declared that the energy he admired could be found in an ant, as well as in an elephant. Even in 1847 Gobineau could not resist injecting a reflection of his die-hard legitimistic sentiments into a work of fiction;

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Casimir Bullet's hopeless love for Sophie Tonska in *Les Pléiades*.

<sup>2</sup> Alain, "Gobineau romanesque," *Nouvelle Revue Française*, XXII, No. 245 (Feb. 1, 1934), p. 202.

thus the satirical references to the bourgeois king and the *aperçus* of the corrupt favoritism which extinguishes the single flame in Emelina Irnois' life.

This *nouvelle*, had it been delineated with somewhat more impassiveness, and less idealism, would fit well into a volume of Mérimée's stories; the subject and the ironic treatment are distinctly characteristic of the latter. "Mademoiselle Irnois" is the only *nouvelle* which Gobineau set against a Parisian background. He was never to return to a French setting in his short stories, and there is only a fleeting satirical treatment of some Parisian scenes glimpsed in "La Chasse au Caribou" and in *Les Pléiades*. This later refusal to portray his compatriots against a native setting symbolizes Gobineau's sense of isolation from his country and his times. Like their creator, his French heroes are spiritual or physical exiles. The arbitrary rejection of the vitiating Parisian or French atmosphere distinguishes him sharply from both Stendhal and Mérimée, who in *Le Rouge et le Noir*, *Lucien Leuwen*, "La Vase Étrusque," and "La Double Méprise," respectively, made literary capital out of the essential disparities between their heroes or heroines and the superficiality and decadence of the environment.

There is a sentimental naïveté which Stendhal would have found antipathetic in Gobineau's concept of love as a means to moral grandeur. This belief informs "La Danseuse de Shamakah" and "Les Amants de Kandahar" in the collection *Nouvelles Asiatiques* and figures importantly in *Les Pléiades*. It offers the idealistic elements of "Akrivie Phrangopoulo" but has a weaker function in that story; its importance in "Mademoiselle Irnois" has already been pointed out. Gobineau was driven to his romantic idealization of *la grande passion* by his uncompromising perfectionism. In literature Mérimée was satisfied with pessimism; Stendhal rejected sentimentality. Gobineau, like Kassem, the hero of "L'Illustre Magicien," was in search of the Absolute, and like Kassem, he found that the Absolute was Love. It was indeed all that he could oppose to his pessimistic historical conclusions concerning the inescapable disintegration of Western civilization by the corruption of Aryan racial purity.

The energy which the Stendhalian hero or heroine may manifest in the satisfaction of personal or political ambition, as well as in the life of the sentiments, can only be channeled into the latter for the Gobineau personage. With the possible exception of Fabrice del Dongo, the struggle with society is important to the development of the Stendhalian hero; Gobineau's heroes never enter into this conflict. Their innate qualities as *filz de rois* make this unnecessary; they are above the sordid bourgeois struggles of "decaying" nineteenth-century European civilization. Ideally their energies and wills must be tested by the yardstick of a grand passion. The heroes and heroines of *Les Pléiades* successfully pass this test, achieving varying degrees of happiness, or even, as in the case of Casimir Bullet, failing to

achieve it; yet all reach heights of grandeur and nobility in the course of sentimental experience, maintaining undefiled a purity of soul which Stendhal, in spite of Rousseauistic temptations, was temperamentally unfitted to accept. Even Fabrice del Dongo, in a sense the purest of Stendhalian heroes, can be accused of Machiavellism. Gobineau did not escape some of his century's sentimental romanticism, which both Stendhal and Mérimée had rejected.

Part of this romanticism can be distinguished in Gobineau's conviction of the fatality of passion, *l'amour-fatalité*, which is discernible in his idealistic love stories, from "Mademoiselle Irnois" to *Les Pléiades*. In the light of this concept Gobineau heroes or heroines are shown to be attracted and held fast in their passionate bonds by sentimental lines of force, often but not always explicable by the corresponding moral worth of the being loved. In the *nouvelles* "Akrivie Phrangopoulo," "Les Amants de Kandahar," and "La Danseuse de Shamakah" the first encounter of the principals is enough to convince the lover of the inevitability and totality of the sentimental attachment. The dancing girl, Omm-Djéhâne, of the last-named story, struggles unsuccessfully to fight against her feeling for the Spanish officer, and achieves moral stature as she is physically destroyed. In this narrative the primitive energy and ferocity of spirit with which Gobineau endows the Asiatic heroine is suggestive of Carmen and Lamiel. The Polish countess Sophie Tonska of *Les Pléiades* shares with Omm-Djéhâne these qualities of *la femme fatale*, a type which Gobineau uses anti-romantically, considering the ironic destiny of the Caucasian *lesghy* and the final surrender of Sophie to the love of the sculptor Conrad Lanze. True passion in Gobineau's view, then, is the means of redemption of *la femme fatale*. We have here the paradox of one romantic concept being used to destroy another.

The use by Gobineau of *l'amour-fatalité* is perhaps most strongly marked in the love affairs of Sophie Tonska, in *Les Pléiades*, who inspires in turn four passions, none of which Gobineau justifies with psychological validity. He offers only her extraordinary physical attraction to account for the mysterious power of the Polish countess, her aura of fatal fascination. This weakness in Sophie's portrait is compensated for by the originality of her presentation as a woman tragically incapable of love. Since Gobineau's purpose was to indicate in Sophie the ironic contrast of a woman with every qualification for inspiring a great love but unable to reciprocate, the reader is obliged to reject as a sentimental weakness in the author her final, gratuitous acceptance of the faithful and impassioned Conrad Lanze.

Gobineau insists on the importance of suffering as a concomitant of *la grande passion*; in this romantic concept he was not far from Stendhal, whose theory of crystallization comported torments of uncertainty and rejection for his *passionés*. In Stendhal's fiction, however, this suffering was generally a spur to energetic action. Gobineau's ideal lovers tend to suffer passively and to reveal grandeur of

soul in a type of renunciation which is in itself a form of energy. In *Les Pléiades* the loves of Wilfred Nore and Harriet Coxe, of Conrad Lanze, of Casimir Bullet, and of Prince Jean-Théodore present examples of this strength granted to the lover to accept the perverse dictates of Fate.

In all these love stories suffering and renunciation are the purifying agents which emphasize the high moral integrity of the participants. Even the "racially inferior" Omm-Djéhâne, of "La Danseuse de Shamakah," exemplifies this concept. In the allegorical fantasy "L'Illustre Magicien," Kassem's pursuit of the Absolute, with its cruel demands of abandonment and asceticism, is fittingly rewarded. In two of Gobineau's Stendhalian stories, "Le Mouchoir Rouge" and "Adélaïde," the respective heroines, Sophie Lanze and Adélaïde, do possess the amoral energies which characterize the women in *Chroniques Italiennes*. However, neither woman represents the Gobineau ideal except in her determined struggle to overcome the obstacle of family in the pursuit of love. Here they join Mohsèn and Djemylèh of "Les Amants de Kandahar," Gobineau's Asiatic interpretation of the Romeo and Juliet theme treated by Stendhal in "L'Abbesse de Castro."

Gobineau's disdain of sensuality is in accord with the ennobling role of love in his aesthetic. While his strong attraction for the exotic is reflected in his powers of sensuous evocation, which are at their best in the stories of the *Nouvelles Asiatiques*, the erotic aspects of Oriental civilization are muted and restrained in that work. His characters skillfully walk the sometimes thin line between sensuousness and sensuality; the lack of deviation is significant. Instead of following Stendhal's example of the chaste presentation of erotic passion, Gobineau rigorously excluded the suggestion of physical love in his fiction. Even when closest to abandoning intellectual lucidity, his heroes and heroines do not lose control; it is an essential mark of their "superiority." This *chevaleresque* concept contributes to the impression of naïveté which some portions of *Les Pléiades* make on the modern reader. The Gobineau knight-errant vanquishes temptation and preserves his purity for his lady fair, and for a relationship sanctioned by society.

Coexistent with this semi-courtly idealism, however, are certain insights into sexual psychology not unworthy of Freud. The portrait of Sophie Tonska is a perceptive foreshadowing of a sublimated emotional-sexual maladjustment commonly diagnosed by present-day psychologists. Sophie's self-knowledge and her attempts at compensation which form the basis of her fictional personality pertain more to our own age of psychoanalysis than to the late nineteenth-century world. *Les Pléiades* offers another unusual sentimental relationship in Harriet Coxe's self-effacing love for the melancholy, illusionless Wilfred Nore. In at least two other instances, in the *nouvelles* "Adélaïde" and "Le Mouchoir Rouge," the attraction of an older



woman for a younger man was used by Gobineau. Those stories make ironic use of the discrepancy in ages, whereas the love of Harriet and Nore is conceived in a sentimental, almost tragic, way. The romanticism of Gobineau's fictive invention in this attachment is acceptable to the twentieth-century reader only because of the delicate analysis of sentiment which redeems it throughout the entire length of the narrative. The author, indeed, flirted with a kind of literary naturalism in having the Englishman test his love for the older, less physically charming Harriet by indulging his momentary attraction to the young, brilliant Liliane Lanze. It is typical of Gobineau that Nore should justify intellectually his eventual rejection of Harriet's rival.

Gobineau must join Stendhal in the latter's quasi deification of love-passion, although the former's depiction of love is considerably attenuated in confrontation with the intense, realistic cruelty of the Stendhalian heroes and heroines. Where Stendhal was supremely true to nature in his psychological analysis of amorous sentiment, Gobineau permits his romanesque conception to place itself between himself and his personages. The result is not a lack of truth; it is instead a blurring of the contours and a preference for certain slight sentimentalities which caress the imagination, where Stendhal's incisive comments stimulate and prod the intellect.

Both Stendhal and Gobineau are opposed in their glorification of love to Mérimée, whose fiction expresses a cynical disillusionment and a sense of the futility of amorous attachments. "Arsène Guillot," with its thematic suggestion of the prostitute's redemption through love, seems to represent Mérimée's closest approach to his confreres. Orso della Rebbia—conceived as a center of the conflict between primitive Mediterranean energies and enervating Continental cultural influences—is perhaps the nearest to a Gobineau character in Mérimée's fiction. But the weakness of the love story in "Colomba" is notable, and Gobineau, with his marked admiration for the English, could not have approved of the thinly drawn, superficial Lydia Nevil. Gobineau was as capable as Mérimée of depicting perverse women (viz., Omm-Djéhâne, Sophie Lanza, Sophie Tonska, Adélaïde), but it is hard to imagine Mérimée, or Stendhal for that matter, creating such innocents as Emmelina Irnois, Akrivie Phrangopoulo, Harriet Coxe, and Aurora Pamina. For Gobineau's ideal lovers are psychologically uncomplex, without reserve and of a total generosity. They conform perfectly to their creator's observation that "l'amour demande à chacun le don de ce qu'il a de plus cher; c'est là ce qu'il faut céder; et, si l'on aime, c'est précisément ce que l'on veut donner."<sup>3</sup>

Gobineau most resembles Stendhal and Mérimée when he treats with comic satire a corollary of his aesthetic of love, the ridicule of personages incapable of or prevented from the exercise of sincerity and generosity in their emotional or sentimental relationships. In

<sup>3</sup> "Les Amants de Kandahar," in the collection *Nouvelles Asiatiques* (Paris: Gallimard, 1949), p. 232.

stories such as "Adélaïde," "Le Mouchoir Rouge," "La Chasse au Caribou," and in several episodes of *Les Pléiades*, Stendhalian and Mériméean flavors abound, as his incisive eighteenth-century clarity illuminates the weakness of the ungenerous ego with an all-comprehending, unsistent irony. The brunt of the satire is borne by those individuals who are unable to see clearly into their own hearts, or who cannot or will not analyze their motivations and actions. The comic relief in these portraits often endows the narratives in which they appear with a greater dimension than the stories where Gobineau's idealism is more directly manifested. This accounts for the superiority of the irony laden "Le Mouchoir Rouge" and "La Chasse au Caribou" over the purely idealistic "Akrivie Phrangopoulo."

The men and women who best embody Gobineau's sentimental and emotional beliefs tend to lack depth and complexity because their superiority, as he conceived it, lay precisely in a straightforward and willed knowledge of themselves. This accounts, conversely, for the present-day reader's disappointment in the incompleteness of the portraits of Sophie Tonska and Lucie and Henri de Genneville in *Les Pléiades*, for one senses that these essentially satirical characters represent a rich mine which Gobineau failed to exploit. We may attribute the success of Stendhal's best character creations to his ability to see both their comic and their tragic sides. Gobineau's sense of humor failed him, however, when he sought to portray the individuals who best represented his concept of moral elite. Fortunately for his fiction, he was attracted by the civilizations and regions which did not fit into his ethnological concepts of superiority. To the resulting contrast in his mind we owe the inspiration for his two most successful collections of shorter fiction, *Souvenirs de Voyage* and *Nouvelles Asiatiques*.

In thus extolling the talents of Gobineau, *ironiste et satirique*, we must not be unjust to the merits of his idealized love stories. Their tendencies to oversimplification and weaknesses in dramatic intensity are a seemingly necessary consequence of the clear-sighted honesty and strength of will which his "aristocrats" possess. The resulting quality of *romanesque*, conditioned by Gobineau's forceful critical intelligence, has a freshness and emotional appeal which assure to his *nouvelles* and to his last novel, *Les Pléiades*, a secure place among the works of second rank in French literature.

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## TRAPPOLIN SUPPOSED A PRINCE AND MEASURE FOR MEASURE

By HELEN A. KAUFMAN

It is a far cry from the Clown-Prince theme to *Measure for Measure*—from Cokain's farce *Trappolin Supposed a Prince* to Shakespeare's provocative tragi-comedy. Yet there are undeniable similarities between the two plays, a situation strangely overlooked. To explore these resemblances, thus bringing into new perspective the farce elements in *Measure for Measure*, is the purpose of the present study.

*Trappolin Supposed a Prince*<sup>1</sup> is an English version of a commedia dell'arte performance which Sir Aston Cokain witnessed in Venice in 1632. That his comedy was not original Sir Aston was the first to admit. In the prologue he says:

Gallants, be't known! as yet we cannot say  
To whom we are beholding for this play;  
But this our poet hath licensed us to tell,  
Ingenious Italy hath liked it well.  
Yet it is no translation, for he ne'er  
But twice in Venice did it ever hear.  
There it did take, and he doth hope, if you  
Have your old humours, it will please here too.  
(p. 116)

What the English author must have "heard" were the performances of a play, possibly entitled *Il Creduto Principe*, which the Affezionati, a commedia dell'arte company, gave twice in Venice during the year 1632. The following lines from the epilogue of the play indicate that he wrote his version while the memory of the two Venetian performances was still fresh, say, late in 1632 or early in 1633.

... here it was not writ,  
In sweet repose and fluencies of wit  
But far remote—at Rome begun, half made  
At Naples, at Paris the conclusion had.<sup>2</sup>  
(p. 204)

Further evidence for believing that Cokain based his comedy on a

<sup>1</sup> Sir Aston Cokain, *Trappolin Creduto Principe or Trappolin Supposed a Prince*, in *Dramatic Works of Sir Aston Cokain*, ed. J. Maidment and W. H. Logan (Edinburgh and London, 1874), pp. 113-204. According to the editors, the play was first printed in 1658, produced sometime before the Restoration, revived with a new prologue by Duffet, and subsequently altered by Nahum Tate and acted as a new piece in 1685 under the title of *A Duke and no Duke*. All references are to the 1874 edition which contains also Cokain's other plays, *The Obstinate Lady* (1657), *The Tragedy of Ovid* (1662), and a masque produced at Brethie in 1639.

<sup>2</sup> K. M. Lea, "Sir Aston Cokayne and the 'Commedia dell'arte,'" *MLR*, XIII (1928), 47-51, says that Cokain spent part of 1632 in Venice and that, according to a letter to his son, he came home by way of Rome, Naples, and Paris, landing at Dover in July, 1633.

performance by the Affezionati is his use of the stage names of this company for several of his characters.<sup>3</sup> Still another indication of his indebtedness to improvised Italian comedy is found in the similarities among *Trappolin Supposed a Prince* and all the extant commedia dell'arte scenarios dealing with the same story.<sup>4</sup> Since the scenarios are but the skeletons of the plots upon which the actors built their performances,<sup>5</sup> it is impossible to determine how closely Cokain's play agrees with the one he witnessed in Venice. The superiority of *Trappolin Supposed a Prince* over Cokain's other plays suggests both full notes and an excellent memory. Certainly his version has preserved the full flavor of the commedia dell'arte. Briefly the story is as follows:

Trappolin, the chief character, is an impudent, witty buffoon, who makes an easy living acting as procurer for the young gentlemen of Florence. Despite his calling, he sincerely loves Flametta who, in her loyalty to Trappolin, refuses the advances of Lord Barbarino. Unfortunately for Trappolin, Lavinio, Duke of Tuscany, before leaving for his marriage to Isabella of Milan, appoints as temporary rulers of Florence, Lords Barbarino and Machavil.

No sooner has the Duke left than Barbarino calls Trappolin before him and, accusing him of corrupting the morals of Florence, banishes him from the city. Shortly thereafter Trappolin meets a conjuror named Mago who, unsolicited, transforms him into the likeness of Duke Lavinio and sends him back to Florence. Trappolin, the supposed Duke, enjoys every minute of his new power. He releases from prison his friend Brunetto and bestows upon him the hand of the Duke's sister, Prudentia, and puts into prison his enemies Machavil and Barbarino.

At the height of Trappolin's power the real Duke returns with his bride Isabella. The ensuing confusion is eventually cleared away by the arrival of Mago. Trappolin, who turns out to be the conjuror's son, is restored to his own likeness and marries his Flametta; Brunetto gets Prudentia; and Lavinio rules in peace.

The suggestion that this topsy-turvy farce, belonging so clearly to the commedia dell'arte genre, in any way resembles *Measure for Measure* may, at first blush, seem absurd—even profane! But an

<sup>3</sup> According to Miss Lea, Cokain took over the stage names of at least five members of the company: Lavinio, a lover; Giovan Fiorillo, nicknamed Trappolino; Isabella Chiesa, who played the Queen; Prudenza, the prima donna; and Fiammetta, a waiting maid.

<sup>4</sup> K. M. Lea, *Italian Popular Comedy* (Oxford, 1934), II, 523, lists the following seventeenth-century scenarios of a story which had been popular with the commedia dell'arte actors for over a hundred years:

*Il Creduto Principe*. [Bib. Casanatense], 4186, no. 20

*Nuovo Finto Principe*. Nap. i. 11

*Finto Principe*. Nap. ii. 48

*Il Finto Re*. Nap. ii. 49

*Arlecchino Creduto Principe*. Gueulette, f. 173

Of these, *Il Creduto Principe* corresponds most closely to Cokain's play. But, as Miss Lea says, in her article in *MLR* quoted above, there is scarcely an incident of Cokain's play "for which we cannot find a parallel in one or other of the Italian versions."

<sup>5</sup> Allardyce Nicoll, *Masks, Mimes and Miracles* (London, 1931), p. 225, says, "Suggestions of the dialogue might be provided by the author, but normally only the barest outline found its way into the official scenario. . . ."

examination of the two plays will, I believe, reveal marked similarities.

In both cases the Dukes, Lavinio in *Trappolin Supposed a Prince*, and Vincentio in *Measure for Measure*, are about to leave their respective cities, Florence and Vienna. Lavinio is going to Milan to get married; Vincentio, purportedly, has been called away on some urgent business of state. Each Duke turns over the government to persons he believes he can trust. Lavinio gives the authority to two Lords to whom he says:

You, whom I ever have found faithful to me,  
Lord Barbarino and Lord Machavil,  
To you do I commit the government  
Of Tuscany until I return,  
And full commission to do what you shall  
See necessary for the good of Florence.

(I, i, p. 121)

Duke Vincentio also leaves two men in control, Escalus and Angelo, though it is, of course, to Angelo that he gives the real power:

... Your scope is as mine own,  
So to enforce or qualify the laws,  
As to your soul seems good. . . .

(I, i, 51-53)

Barbarino, like Angelo, publicly deplores sexual immorality while he privately tries to break down the resistance of honest Flametta, even as Angelo attempts to win over the chaste Isabella. "The villain Trappolin," says Barbarino, "has a handsome wench, and, which angers me, an honest one. I have spent many weeks about her, but never could do any good, she will not, neither for love or money" (I, i, p. 119). Later, when he and Machavil are in control of the city, Barbarino has Trappolin brought before him to be tried for bawdry, explaining to his friend:

This man, Lord Machavil, is one of those  
That doth in Florence nourish vice: he is  
A pandar, one that, if he sees a stranger,  
Straight makes acquaintance with him, for what end  
Yourself may guess. So he may gain thereby,  
He would betray our daughters, lead our sons  
To brothels, vicious and full of rottenness.

(I, ii, p. 128)

The hypocrisy of Barbarino's concern over immorality in Florence is observed by Trappolin who, upon hearing this denunciation, says: "Ah that I durst tell . . . why he thus deals with me! 'Tis for a wench, and yet how eager he is against bawdry!"

This scene, in which Trappolin is condemned and banished from the city, reveals not only a similarity between the lustful hypocrites, Barbarino and Angelo, but provides yet another parallel—that between the two clowns, Trappolin and Pompey. For although Trappolin does not, like Pompey in *Measure for Measure*, serve a Mistress

Overdone, he does follow the same profession. Indeed, the condemnation of Trappolin's occupation by Barbarino is singularly like Escalus' appraisal of Pompey's trade, while Trappolin's saucy rejoinders, and his contention that he is only one of many similarly engaged, are of a piece with Pompey's pert replies. There is, moreover, a resemblance between the very wording of some of the questions and answers in the two scenes. For example, just as Pompey, in reply to Escalus' accusation of bawdry, says, "Truly, sir, I am a poor fellow that would live" (II, i, 231), so does Trappolin answer Barbarino, saying, "I am a poor fellow and must live" (I, ii, p. 128).

Since Trappolin is first of all a clever zany engaged in a socially questionable occupation, it is to be expected that he will on many occasions remind us of Shakespeare's similarly employed clown. The Protean Trappolin is, however, a much more important character than Pompey. Like many of the zanies of the *commedia dell'arte*, he is not content with one role but must appear in a variety of guises and disguises.<sup>6</sup> Consequently, we find him playing not only the part of a clown and bawd, like Pompey, but assuming sometimes the characteristics of an irrepressible and impertinent Lucio,<sup>7</sup> sometimes the role of the Duke himself, and on one occasion the part of a would-be seducer like Angelo.

Trappolin's most important part is, of course, that of the Duke. Like the Duke in *Measure for Measure*, he assumes a disguise which gives him a degree of power over the lives of those about him. The roles of the two men, Duke Vincentio and Trappolin, are, to be sure, not completely identical.<sup>8</sup> In *Measure for Measure* it is Duke Vincentio himself, disguised as a Friar, who walks unrecognized among his people; in *Trappolin Supposed a Prince* it is the clown Trappolin, disguised as the absent Duke Lavinio, who wanders about at will. Yet, in spite of these differences, there are arresting likenesses between the actions and even the characters of Vincentio the dis-

<sup>6</sup> In *English Drama in the Age of Shakespeare*, translated from *Geschichte des neueren Dramas* of William Creizenach (London, 1916), p. 220, we find the following statement: "By allowing a particular character to appear in a series of disguises . . . the author furnishes the actor with the welcome opportunity of displaying his skill in rapid change of costume, facial expression and tone of voice. In the *commedia dell'arte* such *tours de force* played an important part."

<sup>7</sup> Like Lucio who, according to Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, ed., *Measure for Measure* (Cambridge, 1922), *Introd.*, p. xlii, ambles "up and down to turn the whole affair into 'comedy,'" Trappolin adds a farcical touch to every situation. Just as Lucio, by his unceremonious unhooding of the Friar, divests the Duke and the transformation scene of all dignity, so does Trappolin treat with complete disrespect Duke Lavinio whom, with the aid of some magic powder, he changes into the likeness of Trappolin.

<sup>8</sup> Shakespeare's Duke also has points in common with Lavinio and Mago. Like Lavinio, he starts on a journey, leaving his city in the hands of trusted deputies, and returns at the end to issue a round of pardons. Like Mago, who temporarily resigns the reins to his understudy Trappolin, Vincentio turns affairs over to himself disguised as a Friar. In both cases when things get out of hand, the instigators of the plots, Vincentio and Mago, reappear and set matters straight.

guised Duke, and Trappolin the supposed Duke.

The following resumés will serve to recall the main events in which the two masquerading characters, Vincentio the Duke, and Trappolin the clown, are involved. First, to recount briefly Vincentio's complicated course of action:

After having appointed Angelo to enforce the laws which he himself had "let slip," Duke Vincentio decides to stay in Vienna disguised as Friar Lodowick to observe Angelo's "sway." But when Angelo condemns Claudio to death and tries to bargain with Isabella for her brother's life, the Duke, in the guise of the Friar, arranges to save Claudio's life and Isabella's honor by substituting Mariana for Isabella in the midnight rendezvous. Then when Angelo breaks his promise and orders Claudio's death, the Duke-Friar plots with the Provost to save the brother by substituting another prisoner's head.

For no apparent reason he keeps this good news from the sorrowing Isabella. Instead, temporarily adopting the role of Duke, Vincentio turns a deaf ear to Isabella's denunciations of Angelo and orders her carried off to prison. Shortly thereafter, having accused the absent Friar of instigating the slanders against Angelo, Vincentio leaves, to return almost immediately dressed as Friar Lodowick. A little later, after having allowed himself to be insulted and unhooded by Lucio, he permanently resumes his rightful role as Duke and begins his wholesale pardoning. He forgives Claudio, Juliet, Angelo, and even Barnardine; delights Mariana by marrying her to Angelo; and presumably makes Isabella very happy by his own proposal of marriage.

The exploits of the less known Trappolin call for a somewhat more detailed summary.

Following the trial which has already been discussed, the banished Trappolin meets on the outskirts of Florence a conjuror named Mago. The conjuror, Trappolin's unrecognized father, turns the clown into the likeness of the Duke, presents him with some magic powder which can make the real Duke look like Trappolin, and sends him back to the city. To the now obsequious Barbarino and Machavil, surprised by their ruler's speedy return from Milan, Trappolin explains, "I left all my train behind with my wife, and rid as fast as I could drive, that I might come unlooked for, the better to see how you behaved yourselves: which you have done bad enough" (II, iii, p. 150). He upbraids them for the banishment of Trappolin and for their treatment of his friend Brunetto whom they have imprisoned for his affair with the Duke's sister. He then hurries to the jail, releases Brunetto, and imprisons instead his old enemies Barbarino and Machavil.

The farcical proceedings increase in tempo and absurdity when the real Duke with his bride, Isabella, returns to find everything in Florence at sixes and sevens. For a little while the two Dukes wander about busily countermanding each other's orders. People are put into and pulled out of prison with dizzy speed. Even Duke Lavinio, whom Trappolin, the supposed Duke, has, with the aid of the magic powder, transformed into the likeness of Trappolin, spends a few hours in jail. But the confusion is finally resolved by the arrival of Mago who agrees to "clear everything" if everyone will agree to forgive everyone else. Thus Trappolin becomes Trappolin once more, and the play ends, as does *Measure for Measure*, in a regular flurry of pardons.

A comparison of the activities of the two masqueraders suggests that the methods employed by Trappolin, the supposed Duke, are not much more involved than those used by the disguised Duke in *Measure for Measure*. Both men shift back and forth between their assumed and real roles; both spend a good deal of time putting

people into and getting them out of prison; and both busy themselves in an arbitrary way with the lives of their subjects. Trappolin, to be sure, takes himself much less seriously than does the Duke-Friar in *Measure for Measure*. He is admittedly no paragon of virtue but a witty, sly fellow who thoroughly enjoys his vestment of "brief authority" and delights in the discomfiture of his enemies. At the same time he often displays a human and unpretentious sort of justice. Barbarino and Machavil deserve to be punished; Brunetto and Prudentia should be allowed to marry. Indeed, in his own way, Trappolin, like Vincentio, is doing his whimsical best to straighten out the difficulties in which his friends are entangled. Even his high-handed and bizarre methods remind us, at times, of the puzzling ways of Shakespeare's meddling Duke. As a matter of fact, all the hocus-pocus of magic which surrounds Trappolin is not much more of a strain on our credulity than the picture of the thinly disguised Duke Vincentio in *Measure for Measure* rushing about unrecognized by his friends. In some respects it is much less irritating, for once we know where we stand—in the land of magic—we are willing enough to adopt the suspension of disbelief.

Another resemblance between the two plays lies in the roles of Isabella and Flametta. Peculiar to *Measure for Measure* and *Trappolin Supposed a Prince* is the refusal of the lady to accept her tempter's offer.<sup>9</sup> Indeed Flametta twice withstands her would-be seducers. Early in the play she refuses the gifts of the lustful Barbarino who, in his pretended horror of bawdry, reminds one of Angelo. Later it is her own but unrecognized Trappolin whom she fends off when he, disguised as the Duke, tries to seduce her.

It is in this scene that we find the most striking parallel to Angelo's unsavory proposal to Isabella. To Trappolin at the height of his career as supposed Duke comes Flametta to beg for the recall of her supposedly banished Trappolin. The dialogue which takes place between the two might well be called a parody of the tensely tragic scene, common to all versions of the *Measure for Measure* story, in which a woman begs a favor which will be granted only at the price of her virtue. When Trappolin asks Flametta what she will give for her sweetheart's recall, she replies, "All that I have." He takes her at her word and asks her, in a very matter of fact way, for her—shoes! What follows is an unusual version of the old strip-tease act, the astonished Flametta giving to this strange Duke first her shoes, then her stockings, her gown, her petticoat. Flametta does, it is true, hesitate at the petticoat, commenting, "I think the duke's mad," but acquiesces nonetheless. It is only when he insists on her smock that she refuses, saying that her "modesty"

<sup>9</sup> J. P. Wickersham Crawford, "A Sixteenth Century Analogue for *Measure for Measure*," *MLN*, XXXV (1930), 330-34, says that the situation confronting Celia in the *Comedia del Degollado* (1579) differs from the one with which Isabella is faced in that both her would-be seducer and the man for whom she agrees to make the sacrifice relent and refuse to let her carry it out.



will not allow her to go this far even for Trappolin's sake (III, i, pp. 157-59).

Trappolin's momentary adoption of the part of tempter not only illustrates the popular *commedia dell'arte* practice of providing actors with a variety of roles and of rearranging and burlesquing old material, but it also definitely links Cokain's play with *Measure for Measure*. However flippant the dialogue between Trappolin and Flametta may be, it is still a close parallel to the corresponding Angelo-Isabella scene.

In summing up the parallels between *Measure for Measure* and *Trappolin Supposed a Prince* we find that in each play a Duke, setting out on a journey, leaves his realm in charge of a trusted deputy; in each play the deputy, while pretending horror at sexual immorality, unsuccessfully attempts to seduce an honest woman; and in each play there is a clown who acts as a bawd and procurer. Moreover, just as Duke Vincentio, disguised as a Friar, stays on the scene and directs the course of events, so does the clown, Trappolin, disguised as a Duke, watch and manage the affairs of his fellow Florentines. In this connection it is interesting to note that of all the stories or plays which deal with the *Measure for Measure* theme, the only two which depict a *disguised* or *supposed* Duke, who remains on the scene to observe affairs and manipulate them according to his own fancy, are Shakespeare's comedy and Cokain's farce.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> In the nine years preceding *Measure for Measure* there was a succession of plays which introduced variants of the old folk-tale motif of the disguised ruler. Among these are the following: *Blind Beggar of Alexandria* (1595/6), by George Chapman; *Henry V* (1599), by Shakespeare; the anonymous *The Weakest goeth to the Wall* (1600); *The Phoenix* (1602?), by Thomas Middleton; *Law Tricks* (1604?), by John Day; and *The Malcontent* (1604?) and *The Faune* (1604?), by John Marston. In several of these plays the resemblance to the disguised Duke's behavior in *Measure for Measure* is slight. In *Henry V* there is only a brief episode in which the disguised King is unrecognized by his own soldiers; in *The Weakest goeth to the Wall*, merely the incident of the exiled Duke of Bulloigne who, disguised as a sexton, manages to recover his estates; and in *Law Tricks*, the reported death and subsequent disguise of Duke Ferneze, assumed in order to watch over his son. A little closer to *Measure for Measure*'s disguised ruler is the Duke in *Blind Beggar of Alexandria*. Here, the banished Duke Cleanthes, dressed as a blind beggar, has won the confidence of the people and wields great power. Cleanthes, however, is less concerned with the welfare of his people than with his own pleasure. Indeed Chapman's comedy has the full flavor of the *commedia dell'arte* and may well have been influenced by some variant of the Clown-Prince story. His Duke turns out to be a poor shepherd's son who had studied magic with his father, even as Trappolin learned his trickery from his father Mago. Moreover, the supposed Duke, Cleanthes, doubles and trebles his roles in typical *commedia dell'arte* fashion, assuming intermittently the parts of beggar, soldier, merchant, and Duke. In some respects, however, Middleton's *Phoenix* and Marston's two plays have more in common with the disguise in *Measure for Measure*. In *The Phoenix* it is the son who, instead of taking a foreign tour, assumes a disguise and remains at home, thereby saving his father's life and exposing his evil courtiers; in *The Faune*, it is the father who disguises himself as Faunus and accompanies his son abroad in order to watch the young man's wooing and manipulate events as he chooses. Probably Duke Altafronte in *The Malcontent* is more like *Measure for Measure*'s Vincentio than are any other of the disguised rulers. Banished because of the people's impatience with a severe



Likewise, it is only in these two plays that the Dukes marry Isabellas and that the tempted ladies refuse the offers of their would-be seducers.

The similarities between *Measure for Measure* and *Trappolin Supposed a Prince* suggest some sort of relationship. Since Shakespeare produced his tragi-comedy in 1604 and Cokain wrote his play either late in 1632 or early in 1633, it seems reasonable to suppose that *Trappolin Supposed a Prince*, though primarily dependent on a 1632 commedia dell'arte performance, may also have been influenced by *Measure for Measure*. To determine the exact amount of borrowing from either source is difficult, if not impossible. We have no record of the commedia dell'arte play as it was performed in Venice in 1632. All we have are scenarios of the same story, one of which, *Trappolin Creduto Principe*, may well have been the basis of the play acted by the Affezionati and witnessed by Cokain. Unfortunately, the scenarios give us nothing but the skeleton of the action and the names of the characters. Consequently, we can only surmise how closely *Trappolin Supposed a Prince* resembles the 1632 Italian production, how much was Cokain's own invention, and how much, if any, was taken from *Measure for Measure*.

Other paths of conjecture are open. It is possible, for example, that some seventeenth-century commedia dell'arte company may have combined incidents from Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* with the popular old farce of a clown masquerading as a Prince. These extemporary actors were adept at the art of blending and burlesquing old material. They borrowed indiscriminately from written and improvised drama, from the novelle, from legend and contemporary events, combining with complete irreverence the serious and ridiculous. One point is clear: whether or not they knew Shakespeare's play, the professional comedians had long been familiar with the early tragic versions of the *Measure for Measure* theme.<sup>11</sup> We can be sure, moreover, that by 1632, when Cokain saw the Affezionati perform in Venice, some commedia dell'arte group had already combined the *Measure for Measure* story<sup>12</sup> (possibly, but not necessarily,

government, Duke Altafronte, masquerading as the Malcontent, comes back to observe and correct. It must be remembered, however, that none of the plays cited here has to do with the old *Measure for Measure* story.

<sup>11</sup> Emilio Re, *Giornale Storico della letteratura italiana*, Vol. 62 (1913), pp. 175-81, lists the following scenarios of the *Measure for Measure* story: *Il principe severo*, Loc. II, 52; *Ingiusto rettore*, Nap. II, 56; and *Il giusto principe*, Loc. II, 53. The last two are published by Winifred Smith in "Two Commedia Dell'Arte Scenarios on the *Measure for Measure* Story," *Romanic Review*, XIII (1922), 263 ff. The tragic endings suggest that all three scenarios were in existence before Whetstone's *Promos and Cassandra* (1578) and Giraldis Cinthio's *Epitia* (before 1573), in both of which plays the offender is pardoned, weds the wronged lady, and lives happily.

<sup>12</sup> Well known in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the story may have been inspired by some actual occurrence. Basically the plot involves a wife who begs of a high official pardon for a husband imprisoned for some crime. The official, having agreed to grant her request at the price of her virtue, goes back on his promise and has the husband beheaded. The wife appeals to a ruler

Shakespeare's version) with the tale of a zany disguised as a Prince, a theme which had been popular in the repertoires of the Italian companies for more than a hundred years. The result was the farce upon which Cokain based his play.

Since we have stepped out into the field of conjecture, we may at least suggest a third possibility—that a commedia dell'arte, fusing the *Measure for Measure* and Clown-Prince stories, had been performed earlier than 1632, even earlier than 1604.<sup>13</sup> If such was the case, it is possible that Shakespeare could have known and utilized such a play. Or, if the two stories had not been combined as early as 1604, it is possible that he could have been influenced by at least one of them—the old farce of a zany raised to great rank, so often enacted by the improvising comedians.

These comedians kept in circulation a rich store of dramatic material. Natural wanderers, they carried their extemporary plays all over Italy and into Spain, France, Germany, and England.<sup>14</sup> Both Whetstone and Shakespeare refer to the improvised plays and their actors as do many other English authors, while the general public's familiarity with the repertory of these professional companies is attested by the frequent and casual allusions to the commedia dell'arte

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recently returned from a journey, who, after ordering the official to marry the woman, has him executed. In its essentials this is the story which appears in a letter written in 1547 by a Hungarian student, Joseph Macarius; in Claude Rouillet's Latin play, *Philinaria* (1556); in the three scenarios mentioned above; in Cinthio's and Whetstone's dramatic and prose versions; and in eight additional prose accounts prior to 1604, listed by Frederick E. Budd in "Material for a Study of the Sources of Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*," *Revue de Littérature Comparée*, XI (1931), 711-36. Cinthio's story in *Hecatomithi* (1565) was the first to substitute a brother for a husband, and his *Epitia* (before 1573) was the first to end happily. Whetstone, though depending on Cinthio's prose tale and following his lead in regard to the brother, probably arrived independently at the idea of a happy ending.

<sup>13</sup> The more than 700 scenarios which have managed to survive indicate the great number of performances given during the latter half of the sixteenth and much of the seventeenth century. Although there are only a few extant scenarios belonging to the sixteenth century, there are early seventeenth-century miscellanies which contain plots much older than the collections in which they appear. Locatelli's 1618-1622 miscellany, for example, contains a scenario entitled *Le Grandezza di Zanni*, a theme which had long been popular. According to Nicoll, "themes were passed down carefully from generation to generation, so that embedded among the plays of, say, 1650 may be found relics of dramas originally conceived nearly a century before" (*op. cit.*, p. 226). An example of this practice is the inclusion in the seventeenth-century repertory of the Fedeli of scenarios given by another commedia dell'arte company, the Gelosi, as early as 1571.

<sup>14</sup> Sir E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage* (Oxford, 1923), II, 262, gives one of the earliest English references to the comedians, an order in *Acts of the Privy Council*, Jan. 13, 1578, for the Lord Mayor to allow "one Drouisano [Drusiano Martinelli], an Italian, a commediante, and his companye" to play within the city and the liberties of the same between that date and the first week of Lent.

Winifred Smith, *The Commedia Dell'Arte* (New York, 1912), p. 171, comments on the close association of English and Italian dramatic companies on the Continent, stating that on the same day on which an English troupe was giving a play before the Dauphin (Sept. 18, 1604), two commedia dell'arte companies were also performing in Paris.

"masks." This is good evidence for believing that two English plays, Jonson's *Volpone*<sup>15</sup> and Shakespeare's *Tempest*,<sup>16</sup> were in part dependent upon the commedia dell'arte. Moreover, there are a number of comic episodes in other plays of Shakespeare which remind one of scenes from the Italian comedies. In referring to one of these episodes, the theft of the clown's purse by Autolycus in *The Winter's Tale*, Allardyce Nicoll says: "we realize that often Shakespeare approached very close to the comic style of the Italians, and we wonder whether those Elizabethan scenes may not have been inspired, indirectly at least, by this professional comedy of the Continent."<sup>17</sup>

If Shakespeare did make use of a commedia dell'arte,<sup>18</sup> the problems encountered in fitting such flippant and unruly material into the pattern of a basically true and tragic story would have been great. That he might not have succeeded, under such circumstances, in producing a completely integrated play is understandable. Perhaps then, the jarring elements in *Measure for Measure* which have perplexed so many scholars may stem from the combination of the essentially tragic problems inherent in the story with the farcical treatment borrowed, either directly or indirectly, from the commedia dell'arte.

Turning from these conjectures, we come back to the discussion of the similarities between *Measure for Measure* and *Trappolin Supposed a Prince*. To point up these similarities indicates no intention to question the seriousness of the problems with which Angelo, Isabella, and Claudio were faced, but merely a wish to stress the laughter and fun which form so important a part of Shakespeare's complex comedy, and to suggest that the impact of the play as a whole is less somber than some critics would have us believe. Certainly anyone who has witnessed the Stratford production<sup>19</sup> of *Measure for Measure* would seriously question William Winter's pronouncement<sup>20</sup> that the play is unfit for the modern theater and Hardin Craig's statement that "the drama is always played in the dark and is gloomy."<sup>21</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 185-88, finds parallels between the mountebank scene in *Volpone* and a scenario in Scala's miscellany, *Fortuna di Flavio* (Giol. II), which she says might easily have been given in London and was "certainly acted in Paris by the Gelosi whose character names Jonson put in Corvino's mouth."

<sup>16</sup> Presentation of this evidence is found in the following references: Ferdinando Neri, *Scenari delle Maschere in Arcadia* (Città di Castello, 1913); Henry David Gray, "The Sources of *The Tempest*," *MLN*, XXXV (1920), 321-30; and K. M. Lea, *Italian Popular Comedy*, II, 443-53.

<sup>17</sup> Nicoll, *op. cit.*, p. 347.

<sup>18</sup> To suggest that Shakespeare may have been influenced, either directly or indirectly, by the commedia dell'arte is not to question his use of other sources. His dependence on *Promos* and *Cassandra* has long been recognized. He may also have known Whetstone's prose account in *Heptameron of Civill Discourses* (1582) as well as Cinthio's two versions. For the idea of a ruler who returns to his realm in disguise he would, however, have had to look elsewhere—possibly to Marston's *Malcontent* or to Chapman's *Blind Beggar* or to some commedia dell'arte play. See note 10 above.

<sup>19</sup> Directed by Peter Brook with John Gielgud as Angelo (1950).

<sup>20</sup> *Wallet of Time* (New York, 1913), I, 389.

<sup>21</sup> *Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, ed. Hardin Craig (Chicago, 1951), p. 834.

He would probably be more inclined to agree with the spectator who declared *Measure for Measure* to be "a merry, bawdy, and irresistible evening's entertainment for audiences both critical and uncritical."<sup>22</sup>

This spectator's reaction is interesting, for it indicates that the impression made by the Stratford performance was not unlike that of a typical commedia dell'arte production. It suggests, moreover, that the inconsistencies in the Duke's character and his too obvious role of puppet master, as well as the unfused combination of tragedy and comedy in the play, which have troubled so many readers,<sup>23</sup> are actually of little concern to a modern audience. Probably they were also of little concern to Shakespeare's audience. There is at least no evidence to show that seventeenth-century spectators, or critics, were disturbed by the Duke's erratic actions. That some persons regarded him less seriously than do a number of modern scholars is indicated by the fact that Cokain's play, like other seventeenth-century scenarios, gives to a clown a part comparable to that of Shakespeare's Friar-Duke. Seventeenth-century spectators as well as authors, familiar as they were with commedia dell'arte's farcical treatment of serious themes and with the incorporation of comical episodes from the improvised plays into serious drama, apparently were but little disturbed by the inconsistencies of mood, plot, and character in the current tragi-comedies. Everyone knew that the dark clouds hovering over these plays had to be speedily and handily, if irrationally, dissolved. The happy ending was the thing. To understand a play, it is wise to forget the prejudices of our own time and try to recapture the attitudes of the author and the audience for which he wrote.

If *Trappolin Supposed a Prince* does nothing else, it shows that some commedia dell'arte company, recognizing the ironical qualities in the *Measure for Measure* theme, developed from it not a tragedy but a farcical comedy. It also shows that the seventeenth-century English author, Sir Aston Cokain, despite any presumed familiarity he might have had with Shakespeare's version of the story, did not

<sup>22</sup> Robert M. Smith, "Interpretations of *Measure for Measure*," *Shakespeare Quarterly*, I (1950), 209.

<sup>23</sup> The Duke has occasioned many conflicting appraisals. To some scholars, notably Roy W. Battenhouse, "*Measure for Measure* and Christian Doctrine of Atonement," *PMLA*, LXI (1946), 1029-60, and G. Wilson Knight, *Wheel of Fire* (London, 1949), pp. 66-82, he is a symbol of Christian mercy. A representative exponent of another group of critics, H. C. Hart, Arden Edition of *Measure for Measure* (London, 1938), p. xxii, considers the Duke to be not only shifty and irrational, but downright dishonest and cruel. Again, according to such scholars as W. W. Lawrence, *Shakespeare's Problem Comedies* (New York, 1931), p. 102, and William Allan Neilson, *Complete Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare* (New York, 1942), p. 391, the Duke was created primarily for the sake of the plot and should not be taken too seriously. Such sharp divergences of opinion give weight to the statement of Clifford Leech, in "The 'Meaning' of *Measure for Measure*," *Shakespeare Survey*, III (1950), 72, that "mystification" is the Duke's ruling passion.

hesitate to follow the lead of the "improvising comedians" and write a veritable burlesque of the inherently tragic tale.

For in a sense *Trappolin Supposed a Prince* is truly a parody of the *Measure for Measure* theme and, as such, highlights those qualities in Shakespeare's play which, in our concern with its more serious aspects, we are likely to forget. It is as if *Trappolin Supposed a Prince* seizes upon the absurdities, the ironies and inconsistencies in *Measure for Measure*, especially those which elude identification, and not only brings them out into the open but underlines them with bold and exaggerated strokes.

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## THE "FEARS" OF JOHN KEATS

By M. A. GOLDBERG

The usual reading of Keats's sonnet "When I have fears"—and indeed, the usual reading of Keats as a whole—interprets the poetry as the very acme of melancholy. Amy Lowell finds in the sonnet a "vague fear," one of Keats's "usual attacks of hypochondriacism." And R. W. Stallman discerns a Keats "obsessed" with the time conflict and "making a stand against . . . destiny."<sup>1</sup>

What I would like to do here is examine the Keats sonnet, which, far from revealing any melancholy fears, presents what for Keats was perhaps the very essence of existences.

### I

Rime scheme combines with syntax to divide the sonnet automatically into three quatrains, each establishing a temporal contingency for the thirteenth line;<sup>2</sup> that is, "When I have fears," "When I behold," "And when I feel"—then, at these times, "I stand alone, and think." Just as the first three quatrains provide a temporal qualification for the standing alone and thinking, so this thirteenth line provides a causal contingency for the final line of the poem. That "love and fame to nothingness do sink" is a result or consequence of "I stand alone, and think"—just as the standing alone and thinking is a consequence of the earlier fearing, beholding, and feeling. Thus, to "stand alone, and think" is crucial in meaning to the entire poem, not only because it is the apodosis of the body of the sonnet, but because it forms a kind of protasis for the culmination of the poem.

Initially, within these temporal qualifications, an opposition is posited between life and death forces, and is expressed with obvious autumnal imagery. The protagonist fears death before the reaping of the harvest, before poetic maturity has been achieved, before the pen has "glean'd" the "teeming" brain, before "high-piled" volumes hold the "full-ripen'd grain," like "rich garners." It is the urge for poetic fulfillment that Keats expresses here, a fulfillment not too remote possibly from the "fame" he speaks of in the final line.

<sup>1</sup> Amy Lowell, *John Keats* (London, 1924), pp. 558-60; R. W. Stallman, "Keats the Apollinian," *UTQ*, XVI (1947), 142-56. This same view is offered by Thomas E. Connolly, whose analysis of the sonnet in *Explicator*, XIII (1954), 14, offers a Keats "troubled with the problem of a spiritual survival after physical life has ended." In line with the usual reading of Keats is Jacob D. Wigod's recent essay, "Keats's Ideal in the *Ode on a Grecian Urn*," *PMLA*, LXXII (1957), 118, which observes that though the poet was in 1817 a Wordsworthian idealist and humanitarian, by 1819 his subject had altered, for "in the interim he had experienced suffering. . . . His subject now was the melancholy of change and pain. . . ."

<sup>2</sup> References to Keats's poetry are from H. W. Garrod's edition of *Poetical Works of John Keats* (Oxford, 1939). References to the letters are from *Letters of John Keats*, ed. Maurice Buxton Forman (Oxford, 1952).

Whereas the first quatrain expresses life's meaning in terms of the autumnal season, the second quatrain condenses this to the single night. Here, images shift from the seasonal to the more limited temporal basis, as the protagonist looks upon the "night's starr'd face," the "cloudy symbols," the "shadows." And in the final quatrain time becomes still more limited as the protagonist surveys the "fair creature of an hour." Imagistic development, then, is in progressively smaller time units: from the season to the night to the single hour—leading ultimately in the final line to "nothingness."

Simultaneous with this diminution of time, however, is a diminishing spatial movement. Whereas the first quatrain deals with rather concrete and substantive images (the "pen," the "brain," the "books," the "grain"), the second quatrain deals only with the "cloudy symbols" of things, the "shadows" of events, the "magic hand of chance." The ephemeral and evanescent have replaced the concrete; but even this is reduced in the third quatrain to consideration of a "faery power," the abstract, here not even a shadow or cloudy symbol of the phenomenal and substantive. Finally, there is a fading away into "nothingness," as the protagonist moves outside the space-time dimension, through progressively smaller space-time units.

Whether the poet means to imply in this movement toward "nothingness" only a diminution of physical substance, or whether he means to imply also a removal from value and essence—this, I believe, is as yet too early to determine. But we must recognize both possibilities. "Nothingness" can imply a physical reduction to zero, or it can imply a reduction to insignificance. To assume, together with R. W. Stallman and Amy Lowell, that Keats is talking about death here, with its melancholy threat to deprive the individual of both the substantive and meaningful, is indeed a temptation—though perhaps a facile solution to a rather complex and important problem for Keats.

Relative to the images of the first quatrain, the protagonist is a rather passive individual, being acted upon rather than himself acting. It is not the narrator who actively gleans his brain; rather it is the pen, an object external to self—just as the books, again objects external to self, contain the fruits of the poetic harvest. This is a completely passive realm we face here, where the brain is a kind of field to be gleaned and ideas are grain to be held. In the second quatrain passivity is still present, though it has been substantially reduced. The protagonist fears he may "never live to trace" the shadows of a high romance; but this is only potentially active, and hardly volitional, since the tracing is done "with the magic hand of chance." It is chance's hand, the external force, that allows the narrator to trace the shadows. By the third quatrain external forces have been reduced still further, as the protagonist sees life in terms of looking upon the fair creature, actively and deliberately. Whereas the second quatrain specifically attributes the action to the controlling "hand of chance," here it is only implicitly that we see the control—for his gaze and



relish are in a "faery power," and one may well wonder whether the protagonist has liberated himself completely from the external forces acting upon him. Only by the final couplet, when "I stand alone, and think," does he free himself from these forces to become an acting, deliberating, volitional creature.

Reinforcing this shift from passive to active state, from earlier imprisonment to ultimate freedom, is a shift in verbal auxiliary within the poem. In both the first and second quatrains Keats uses the auxiliary "may" to express the possibility that the protagonist "may cease to be" and "may never live." But by the third quatrain there is a shift from possibilities expressed by "may" to determination and/or obligation expressed by "shall." Keats certainly could have used "may" here again, or even the more colorless "will," without disrupting rhythm, texture, or superficial meaning. Therefore, the shift from "may" to "shall" in line 10 must serve as a deliberate link of volition, between possibilities dimly perceived in the first two quatrains and the fulfillment clearly discernible by the final couplet. The protagonist is on his way to becoming, with increasing probability, a self-willing individual, active rather than passive, relieved of his fears, and outside the space-time dimensions. When this is done, he can stand "on the shore / Of the wide world . . . and think," so that ultimately "love and fame to nothingness do sink."

## II

It is not the protagonist, it should be noted, who sinks, but rather "love and fame." Actually, he achieves some kind of height by the close of the poem. By freeing himself from a concern with death, he has risen figuratively above his fears. But also, the liberation of self from constricting spatio-temporal forces was a deliberate and active movement; therefore, one can assume this is a rise toward and not a descent from value—particularly when the initial fear of death stems from a desire for value, and that value is identified with love and poetry. Finally, if the love and fame with which he was initially intimate now sink, then their ultimate sinking must imply an ascent on his part.

Now, there are two ways to interpret the position of the protagonist, relative to the sinking of love and fame—though in either case there is the implication that he rises. One is that he remains on the same level as he was initially, but that freeing himself from love and poetry, they become inferior aims, and therefore he is above them. The second is that they remain on the same level, and that in the process of freeing himself, he rises above love and poetry, climbing, as it were, a ladder toward "the shore / Of the wide world," where he might "stand alone, and think."

It is the second of these hypotheses I want to project—not that the poem is altered considerably by preferring the second, but rather because it appears to agree more closely with a metaphysics Keats him-

self creates, both in his letters and in his other poetry, and in this sense makes for an interpretation richer in degree, though I do not believe different in kind.

Earl R. Wasserman has already pointed to a cosmological framework central to Keats's poetry<sup>3</sup>—the "Pleasure Thermometer" outlined in Keats's letter (January 30, 1818) to John Taylor. Here, the poet writes of *Endymion* (I, 777 ff.):

when I wrote it it was a regular stepping of the Imagination towards a Truth. My having written that . . . Argument will perhaps be of the greatest Service to me of any thing I ever did. It set before me at once the gradations of Happiness even like a kind of Pleasure Thermometer. . . .

The gradations of happiness to which Keats refers, these imaginative steppings toward a truth, are in *Endymion* the rise from a primary level of "music's kiss" to the "richer entanglements" of "love and friendship." Through these steps, *Endymion* explains to Peona, man can ultimately climb to a "sort of oneness": "A fellowship with essence; till we shine, / Full alchemiz'd and free of space" (I, 779-80).

It is this same hierarchy, it would seem, that Keats envisions in the "When I have fears" sonnet—the "stepping of the Imagination" from poetry (the concern of the first two quatrains) to love (the protagonist's concern in the third quatrain), until eventually, "free of space," the "fellowship with essence" can be achieved.

Thus, when love and fame sink in the final line of the sonnet, it is not their essence which is being rejected, but only the spatial and temporal elements which prevent man from entering into their essence. Sinking to "nothingness," then, does not imply that they are reduced to a mathematical zero and become ethically meaningless, but rather that the thingfulness of poetry and love is removed. The substantive has been reduced to zero, that aspect which is subject to space and time: the mutable, the changing, the impermanent, the mortal. What the protagonist is left with in the experience is their essence: the immutable, the unchanging, the permanent, the immortal.

This interpretation of "nothingness" as lack-of-substance rather than lack-of-significance is not a distinction peculiar to the sonnet alone. The semantic distinction is a common one, though the metaphysical implications are not—except, perhaps, within the empirical framework of early nineteenth-century England. For Keats this is a fundamental difference, basic to this sonnet, and basic to much of his poetry and letters. To Bailey on March 13, 1818, Keats writes, making this same discrimination:

every mental pursuit takes its reality and worth from the ardour of the pursuer

<sup>3</sup> Earl R. Wasserman, *The Finer Tone* (Baltimore, 1953). The pattern Wasserman discerns in Keats's major poems is not too remote from the structure perceptible in this sonnet. Though I have resisted pushing the pattern to the extent he does, my debt to Wasserman's reading is, I believe, apparent.

—being in itself a nothing—Ethereal thing<s> may at least be thus real, divided under three heads—Things real—things semireal—and no things. Things real—such as existences of Sun Moon & Stars and passages of Shakspeare. Things semireal such as Love, the Clouds &c which require a greeting of the Spirit to make them wholly exist—and Nothings which are made Great and dignified by an ardent pursuit. . . .

In themselves, Keats implies here, poetry and love are little—as are most “things” in life; but their “reality and worth” can be achieved from “the ardour of the pursuer.” Value is experiential, and “nothings” and “things semireal” take on reality and “are made Great and dignified by an ardent pursuit.” It is precisely this kind of pursuit that engages the protagonist in the sonnet under examination and that allows him to achieve “reality and worth” from the materials experienced.

To Haydon (May 10, 1817) Keats writes of “the Sun the Moon the Stars, the Earth and its contents”; in themselves, these are nothing, except as “materials to form greater things—that is to say ethereal things.” Again, in an extended letter to George and Georgiana (March 19, 1819) Keats notes: “Nothing ever becomes real till it is experienced.”

Endymion, in his renunciation of Cynthia, makes this same distinctive use of “nothingness”:

I have clung  
To nothing, lov'd a nothing, nothing seen  
Or felt but a great dream! (IV, 637 ff.)

It is not that he has clung to nothing of essential value that Endymion laments here, but rather that he has clung to nothing substantive, to the non-tangible, to the “cloudy phantasms” and “air of visions.” And in the “Ode on Indolence” the protagonist addresses the shadowy figures before him with this same use of “nothingness”: “O, why did ye not melt, and leave my sense / Unhaunted quite of all but—nothingness?”

Initially in the sonnet being examined the protagonist perceives two opposing forces: death as a negating force, and poetry-and-love as a positive force with which he aligns himself. Eventually, in an impassioned pursuit of the positive force, which is at once experiential and axiological, he can penetrate its essence and discover its value. This is experiential in manner, for the protagonist must follow the pursuit in the world of sensations and things; and it is axiological in its purpose, for the pursuit is toward value. By the close of the sonnet the protagonist has established a new scale of values, based no longer on an opposition between life and death forces, but instead on a contradistinction of Thing and Value. Thus, in the final line, when poetry and love “to nothingness do sink,” thing has been subordinated to value, poetry and love have been subordinated to their essence, and the world of mortality has been left behind for the immutable, the fixed, the essential.

## III

To operate within the consistency of the value scale suggested within the sonnet, however, demands that the value of the protagonist as Person lies not in his substantive or thingful form, but rather in his own immutability and essence. Necessarily, "fellowship with essence" must be a two-way experience. It must penetrate into the heart of the experience by annihilating thingfulness, but there must simultaneously be an annihilation of individuality, of self.

This self-destruction can perhaps be perceived more easily in the relationship of line 13 to the rest of the poem. Three conditions are suggested in this penultimate line, conditions resulting from the earlier fears and culminating in the nothingness: first, cosmological location ("on the shore / Of the wide world I stand"); second, personal isolation ("alone"); and third, a process of reflection ("... and think").

Keats's concern in this penultimate line is other than geographic location, it would seem, if only because the development of the sonnet deliberately leads us outside temporal and spatial dimensions to arrive at the "fellowship with essence." It is at "the tip-top" of the "Pleasure Thermometer," as Endymion suggests to Peona (I, 805), at the height of the hierarchical ladder formed by poetry and love, that is seemingly implied by "the shore of the wide world"—that thin dividing line between the fluid and the fixed, the mortal and the immortal, in a wide world that for Keats appears to include both elements. It is a point at which oppositions are reconciled and contraries merged—not too remote probably from the "shores of darkness" on which there is light in Keats's sonnet "To Homer," that dividing point between Heaven and Earth, between knowledge and ignorance, between sight and blindness. Or the "bewildered shores" about which fallen old divinities, being neither deities nor mortals, wander in *Hyperion* (III, 9). Or the "shore of tangled wonder" toward which "airy voices cheat" the mortal Endymion (IV, 654) in his search for immortal Cynthia.

What has brought the protagonist to this shore has been a reflective process, imaginative rather than conceptual, in a drama internal to self. As in *Endymion* (I, 294-95) the aim has been at "solitary thinkings; such as dodge / Conception to the very bourne of heaven." Thus, personal isolation (which follows upon the earlier preoccupation with external things and forces) and thinking (which follows upon the earlier fearing and feeling) are destined to carry the protagonist beyond the shore into pure essence, and seemingly toward self-annihilation, and ultimately death.

But self-annihilation is not a maleficence for Keats. Just as nothings were "made Great and dignified by an ardent pursuit," so the pursuer himself achieves his identity, his greatness and dignity, to the degree to which he annihilates the ego, destroys the self, projecting

his individuality into the totality of the experience. Thus, the true poetical character is paradoxically "every thing and nothing," Keats writes to Woodhouse (October 27, 1818):

A Poet is the most unpoetical of any thing in existence; because he has no Identity—he is continually in for—and filling some other Body—The Sun, the Moon, the Sea and Men and Women who are creatures of impulse are poetical and have about them an unchangeable attribute—the poet has none; no identity. . . . When I am in a room with People if I ever am free from speculating on creations of my own brain, then not myself goes home to myself: but the identity of every one in the room begins to <for so> to press upon me that I am in a very little time an<ni>hilated. . . .

Or again, to Bailey on November 22, 1817, Keats explains: "Men of Genius are great as certain ethereal Chemicals operating on the Mass of neutral intellect—by <for but> they have not any individuality, any determined Character. . . ." This self-annihilation, de-emphasizing the ego to produce a state of non-self, is the condition toward which the protagonist seems to be aiming at the conclusion of the sonnet—moving poetry and love outside space and time, but simultaneously moving himself outside these dimensions, in order that he might enter into the essence of the experience. In so far as self is thing, then self is annihilated, in order that self as value might survive in its essence. So is it that "Apollo die[s] into life" in *Hyperion* (III, 130), for as with the god of poetry, so is it with the poet on earth: living must be a dying. And so too in the sonnet "Why did I laugh tonight," where "Verse, Fame, and Beauty are intense indeed, / But Death intenser—Death is Life's high meed."

This vision of death as life's highest meed, as its greatest value, as an entrance into permanence and essence, is a far cry from the "vague fear" Amy Lowell discerns in the sonnet. And it is indeed remote from Stallman's perception of a melancholy and tortured Keats, taking his "stand against . . . destiny."

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# A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF CRITICAL ARTHURIAN LITERATURE FOR THE YEAR 1956

*Prepared by*

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>ADA</i>	Anzeiger für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur
<i>Archiv</i>	Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen
<i>BA</i>	Books Abroad
<i>BBCS</i>	Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies
<i>BBSIA</i>	Bulletin Bibliographique de la Société Internationale Arthurienne
<i>Beiträge</i>	Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur (Tübingen)
<i>BHR</i>	Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance
<i>CE</i>	College English
<i>CL</i>	Comparative Literature
<i>CN</i>	Cultura Neolatina
<i>Conv</i>	Convivium
<i>DA</i>	Dissertation Abstracts
<i>DAEM</i>	Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters
<i>DLZ</i>	Deutsche Literaturzeitung
<i>DU</i>	Der Deutschunterricht (Stuttgart)
<i>DVLG</i>	Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte
<i>EA</i>	Études Anglaises
<i>EC</i>	Études Celtiques
<i>EG</i>	Études Germaniques
<i>EHR</i>	English Historical Review
<i>ELH</i>	Journal of English Literary History
<i>ES</i>	English Studies (Amsterdam)
<i>FiR</i>	Filologia Romanza
<i>FR</i>	French Review
<i>FS</i>	French Studies
<i>GLL</i>	German Life and Letters
<i>GQ</i>	German Quarterly
<i>GR</i>	Germanic Review
<i>GRM</i>	Germanisch-romanische Monatsschrift, Neue Folge

My greatest debt in this issue is probably to Professor William Roach, who generously gave me access to his personal library. Certain items I owe to some of my colleagues on the Committee on Bibliography, of the Modern Language Association: one to John Gage Allee, one to Richard C. Clark, one to Charles C. Mish, and one to Zbigniew Folejewski. My colleague at Temple, George McFadden, lent me an offprint. Professor Robert W. Ackerman has likewise cooperated, as previously, by exchanging items with me.

In the interest of thoroughness, and to avoid further delay, I have followed the example of Professor Parry and listed four items from the *BBSIA*, with the kind permission of the editor, Professor Jean Frappier. These are marked with their *BBSIA* numbers.

Work on the bibliography was aided by a grant from the Committee on Research, Temple University.

<i>GSLI</i>	Giornale Storico della Letteratura Italiana
<i>HR</i>	Hispanic Review
<i>JAF</i>	Journal of American Folklore
<i>JEGP</i>	Journal of English and Germanic Philology
<i>LI</i>	Lettere Italiane
<i>LM</i>	Les Langues Modernes
<i>LR</i>	Les Lettres Romanes
<i>MA</i>	Le Moyen Age
<i>MÆ</i>	Medium Ævum
<i>MF</i>	Midwest Folklore
<i>MLJ</i>	Modern Language Journal
<i>MLN</i>	Modern Language Notes
<i>MLQ</i>	Modern Language Quarterly
<i>MLR</i>	Modern Language Review
<i>MP</i>	Modern Philology
<i>MS</i>	Mediaeval Studies
<i>N&amp;Q</i>	Notes and Queries
<i>Neophil</i>	Neophilologus
<i>NS</i>	Die Neueren Sprachen
<i>PMLA</i>	Publications of the Modern Language Association of America
<i>QJS</i>	Quarterly Journal of Speech
<i>RBPH</i>	Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire
<i>Regesten</i>	Regesten van de aanwinsten van het Instituut voor Vergelijkend Literatuuronderzoek aan de Rijksuniversiteit te Utrecht
<i>RES</i>	Review of English Studies
<i>RF</i>	Romanische Forschungen
<i>RJ</i>	Romanistisches Jahrbuch
<i>RLC</i>	Revue de Littérature Comparée
<i>RLI</i>	La Rassegna della letteratura Italiana
<i>RLR</i>	Revue des Langues Romanes (Montpellier)
<i>Rom</i>	Romania
<i>RP</i>	Romance Philology
<i>RR</i>	Romanic Review
<i>SAQ</i>	South Atlantic Quarterly
<i>SDDUW</i>	Summaries of Doctoral Dissertations, University of Wisconsin
<i>SFQ</i>	Southern Folklore Quarterly
<i>SP</i>	Studies in Philology
<i>TLS</i>	[London] Times Literary Supplement
<i>UTQ</i>	University of Toronto Quarterly
<i>UTSE</i>	University of Texas Studies in English
<i>WuW</i>	Welt und Wort
<i>WW</i>	Wirkendes Wort
<i>YR</i>	Yale Review
<i>YWES</i>	Year's Work in English Studies
<i>YWMLS</i>	Year's Work in Modern Language Studies
<i>ZAA</i>	Zeitschrift für Anglistik und Americanistik
<i>ZCP</i>	Zeitschrift für Celtische Philologie
<i>ZDA</i>	Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur
<i>ZDP</i>	Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie
<i>ZRP</i>	Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie

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## REVIEWS

*New Readings in Shakespeare.* By C. J. Sisson. Vol. I: Introduction, Comedies, Poems. Vol. II: Histories, Tragedies. Cambridge: At the University Press, Shakespeare Problem Series, Vol. VIII, 1956. I, viii + 218; II, vi + 300. \$8.50 the set.

These volumes do not represent a project likely to have been conceived and carried out from scratch. Rather, they are gleanings from the workshop of Professor Sisson's recent one-volume complete edition of Shakespeare. The origin has very considerably determined the nature of the work: notes on a selection of emendations adopted in the Sisson text, or defenses of original readings there retained without emendation.

The title *New Readings* is somewhat of a misnomer, for the majority of the readings discussed are not "new" in the sense that they have never been previously considered or utilized by editors. Instead, it develops, Professor Sisson has proposed for himself a survey of what seem to him to be prominent textual cruxes, and their solutions, that have been the especial concern of editors since the start of J. Dover Wilson's *New Cambridge Shakespeare*. Some confusion is latent here, for all "new" editors have had to take a position on the usual debated readings. There appears to be some strain in considering as "new readings" such instances as Sisson's preference for Theobald's *obstruct* (*A & C* III. vi.61) as against Wilson's and Kittredge's retention of *F obstruct*; and the usefulness of picking up for discussion most of Wilson's perverse alterations, such as the rearrangement of *Hamlet* I.i.117-25, is debatable. Moreover, Sisson tacitly limits the "new editors" whose readings he will consider to himself and Wilson, with some side references to Kittredge and Alexander. This severe limitation is most unfair to such American editors as Parrott, Craig, Campbell, Bald, and Harrison, for instance, who are not mentioned and presumably were not consulted.

Sisson is a handwriting expert. It is natural that he should stress the value in textual work of handwriting evidence and the possibilities for misreading. Faced with a crux, he ordinarily writes out the passage in a conventional secretary hand and hopes that the letter formations will suggest wherein the compositor was led astray. No critic in his right mind can deny the value of handwriting evidence. However, one may perhaps query the extreme, and even unique, value that the author takes for granted in his method. In the first place, if an error is suspected, and that error is written in Elizabethan script, it would be logical to suppose that the error formation was reversible if the correct original can be deduced from the physical appearance of the error. But most mistakes arising from misreading are not, as Sir Walter Greg has pertinently remarked, reversible. For example, if a correct letter *a* without its horizontal stroke may be mistaken for a *u*, it does not follow that, similarly, a correct *u* may be mistaken for an *a*. When Sisson is not, in fact, arguing from analogy only—that is, from a guess as to the right meaning on other grounds, followed by an attempt to justify the reading by appeal to its script conformation—he is likely to fall into logical difficulty except in such cases as confusions of *d* and *e*, or of *o* and *e*, which every tyro knows.

Although bibliographers are aware that what is probably the major source of textual corruption comes less from straightforward handwriting error than from a compositor's memorial failure or a quick partial misreading guided by sound, Sisson, if given a choice between simple misreading and memorial jingle, will invariably choose the handwriting explanation. It may be as he asserts (I, 12) that for *Timon of Athens* IV.iii.12 his suggestion *wether* for F *Brother* is better than the conventional *rother*. But his reasoning is suspect because *rother* by no means, as he unfairly alleges, "presupposes a compositor who could insert a superfluous *B* in order to make nonsense"; on the contrary, *rother* assumes only memorial failure, or a "meaning mistake" contrary to the evidence of the handwriting, purely on compositorial assumption, like "Fine clad" for "I'm glad" in Dekker's *Match Me in London*. So, it is a misconception of the type-setting process to remark that *bold-beating-oathes* in *MWW* II.ii.29 is "remote in sense" from the proposed emendation *bull-baiting oaths*: what is significant is that it is close in sound.

This is not the place to discuss the virtues and defects of specific Sisson readings, but rather the method and the general tenor of his discussion. When he is on single-text plays and concerned with handwriting problems, he is interesting. On the other hand, with complex plays that own more than one substantive text, he never discusses the relationship or the nature of the respective printer's copy or allows thought of such a necessary decision to affect the eclecticism of his choice of readings. His basic attitude toward the editing of such plays as *Hamlet* and *Othello*, therefore, is no different from that of the Old Cambridge editors.

Moreover, it is disturbing to find a strong strain of dogmatism in various remarks, usually accompanying the expression of opinion without supporting evidence, although a statement may be made that such evidence exists. This bare assertion is neither scholarly nor helpful. We are scarcely informed to read about *King Lear* I.ii.20-21: "But the *base* shall to the *legitimate* offers no difficulty. The *base* shall turn into the *legitimate*, shall usurp legitimacy, and so succeed to Edgar's land and position. There is ample authority for this use of *to*. *to* or *too*, as a misreading of *top*, is highly implausible." A commentator should cite such "ample authority." Another form of loose treatment of evidence occurs at *Hamlet* I.i.45, in which Sisson prefers F *question it* to Q2 *speak to it* as "possibly one of the examples of revision by Shakespeare, of which there are undoubted instances in the Folio text." Unfortunately, this revision is referred to nowhere else, and the "undoubted instances" are not offered for our scrutiny.

On the whole, *New Readings* represents old-fashioned critical eclecticism with a superimposed veneer of handwriting investigation into the possible nature of textual corruption, the method uninformed with any hint of modern bibliographical investigation that is revolutionizing the study of Shakespeare's text. Hence it would not be helpful to put these volumes into the hands of students, for they could be seriously misleading about Shakespearean textual criticism to any but an expert. This is not to say that the grounds for criticism in which Sisson is most secure have produced nothing of value. On the contrary. It is to say, however, that his original contributions that must be considered by future editors might better have been contained in a learned-journal article than spaced out through two rather expensive volumes addressed to no very clear-cut audience.

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*Il pensiero religioso di Shelley*, con particolare riferimento alla "Necessity of Atheism" e al "Triumph of Life." By BICE CHIAPPELLI. Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1956. Pp. 130. [Introduction by Mario Praz.]

Miss Chiappelli's monograph on Shelley's religious thought is divided into two parts: the first assigns the celebrated pamphlet to Hogg (her argument adds little to F. L. Jones's [*PMLA*, 1937] and K. N. Cameron's), and outlines Shelley's development as a poet and thinker with "a natural affinity to the teaching of Christ"; the second part, on Shelley's last poem, interprets *Iris* ("A Shape all light") as a symbol of evil (a radically unconventional interpretation partially anticipated in Yeats's *Ideas of Good and Evil*), sees her as a type of Eve in a re-enactment of the fall of man, and presents the poem as a climactic illustration of how closely Shelley at the end of his career approximated the totality of Christian belief, even to the extent of accepting the doctrine of divine punishment in a future life.

The method, as described in an introduction by Mario Praz, is highly selective: to hew to "the main line of Shelley's thought," which is the "imitation of Christ." The result is an ex parte account of Shelley, who emerges as a Christian gentleman with his revolutionary fires almost quenched. Miss Chiappelli often quotes with insufficient contextual analysis, and in her discussion of the young Shelley she relies too heavily on the Julian edition of the letters. Both faults are visible on page 34, where the passage "a God exists" (Julian, VIII, 43) is lifted from a complex and confusing letter which seems to describe a skeptic rather than a believer; in fact, the skeptic appears in Scott's edition of the early letters (*New Shelley Letters* [London, 1948], p. 24), where the passage in question reads "I here take God (if a God exists)..." Insufficient analysis and cross reference, and neglect of conceptions and feelings running counter to Christian belief, weaken a valuable current of her discussion: that the Christian elements in the poetry perhaps played a more important part in the beliefs of Shelley the man than is generally thought. Her method assumes a simple pattern of systematic progression toward a Christian synthesis in the poet and the man, when in fact the line is cut by pantheism, deism, agnosticism, diatribes against Christianity, secularism—matters which are relevant in determining the exact coloring of Shelley's religious speculations, but which the method neglects or minimizes as side issues.

The author minimizes the *Necessity of Atheism*, for example, on the probability that Shelley had only a nominal part in its composition. Actually it is an important document for her purpose in tracing the pattern of religious thought in the young Shelley, for he acknowledged its agnostic argument by incorporating the pamphlet in the notes to *Queen Mab*. The pattern of thought and feeling is, generally speaking, ambiguous: "would that I could believe... would that I could totally disbelieve... I here take God (if a God exists)..." (Scott, pp. 23-24); "Let this horrid Galilean rule the canaille then... I took the Sacrament with her [Harriet] on Sunday" (*ibid.*, p. 30). Sudden shifts, tension, or hesitation, which seem symptomatic of a deep-seated disturbance leading Barnard (*Shelley's Religion*, 1936) to conclude that the young Shelley did not know what to believe, affected the structural consistency of his poetry. In *Adonais*, for example, from Stanza xxxix to the end, what Miss Chiappelli plausibly construes as a Christian element, and understands as the only informing principle of the poem, is accompanied by a pantheistic conception of nature. Zigzag structure, of the sort vividly illustrated by the concluding lines of the first Chorus of *Hellas* ("And at thy resurrection... If Heaven... If Hell... If Annihila-

tion..."), indicates as more suitable the method used by I. J. Kapstein (*PMLA*, 1947), which examines contextually statement in relation to counterstatement and sets up alternative readings in the process of determining the drift of meaning.

Miss Chiappelli uniformly approaches Shelley's poetry as faithful spiritual and intellectual autobiography and takes the Christian elements in a poem as an index to his belief. This long-established approach is supported by Shelley's theory of poetry as self-expression and by occasional statements on his practice: in the *Revolt of Islam* he was "resolved to leave some records of myself" (Julian, IX, 266; cf. Scott, p. 20). But the uniform approach Miss Chiappelli adopts is questionable even in the instance of Shelley, the subjective poet par excellence, who in Browning's words "digs where he stands." It does not take into account the distinction "between those opinions which have a dramatic propriety in reference to the characters...and such as are properly my own" (*Revolt of Islam*, Preface), or the possibility that the poet may introduce matters which are aesthetically satisfying but "inadmissible in reasoning" (Julian, VIII, 103), or introduce the "popular notions of Christianity" in a historical relation without reference to their truth (*Hellas*, note 2).

Miss Chiappelli readily translates, for example, the second Chorus of *Hellas* into Shelley's belief in the divinity of Christ without considering that the Chorus may be speaking exclusively and appropriately for a Christian people struggling for freedom under the Cross. That the second Chorus is so speaking is clear from the penultimate stanza of the final Chorus and note 8 to it, where Christ is alluded to as a "sublime human character" representing a stage in the moral development of civilization, and not as the absolute value that divinity implies. In fact, note 8 decorously rephrases the vociferous denial of His divinity made about a year before the composition of *Hellas* (Julian, X, 106). For Shelley, the center of interest is the social-ethical aspect of Christ's teaching, and in this connection it is pertinent to note that he decidedly favored the Gospel on the human Christ, that of Matthew (Weaver, p. 156), and tended to secularize His teaching: "That those who are pure in heart shall see God, and that virtue is its own reward, may be considered as equivalent assertions. The former of these propositions is a metaphorical repetition of the latter" (*Essay on Christianity*).

Shelley himself was aware of something like a split between the artist and the man: "The poet and the man are two different natures; though they exist together they may be unconscious of each other..." (X, 287). The statement exaggerates, but it does suggest that the meaning operating in a poetic construct does not always coincide with the man's belief. The large conclusion that Miss Chiappelli draws from the *Triumph of Life*, that Shelley "had in essence accepted the Christian religion," is unconvincing; for the evidence in the prose Shelley does not agree with presumed evidence from the poem, where echoes of Christian doctrine (if they are really that) probably have a restrictedly symbolical value for Shelley the man. Three months before he died, at the time he was composing or about to compose his last poem, he vehemently attacked "the monstrous superstitions of the popular worship" (X, 378). Miss Chiappelli discounts this passage as a brief lapse into his youthful mode of thinking about Christianity. Actually, this mode is continuous in the later Shelley, as can be illustrated abundantly from the letters: in 1820 he summarily rejected Christianity whether in the form of "the popular superstition in all its articles" or in "some other more refined theory" of it, and a few days before he died he remarked on the moral obligation to speak against "the gross and pre-

posterosus" delusions of Christianity (X, 203, 410; cf. VII, 310; IX, 181; X, 26, 47, 105 ff.).

Such passages are clearly an attack on at least the doctrinal side of Christianity; yet it is precisely on the doctrinal side that Miss Chiappelli argues for Shelley's Christian beliefs, and from the last poem reaches the improbable conclusion that Shelley at the end of his career had accepted the doctrine of divine punishment. Since the prose Shelley repeatedly rejects this doctrine as an insult to a merciful God, it is reasonable to conclude that its value is not literal but symbolical—the value Shelley assigns to the "modern mythology," as he calls it (*A Defence of Poetry*), of Dante's *Comedy*, which this last poem at times closely imitates.

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*Briefe der Brüder Grimm an Savigny.* Aus dem Savignischen Nachlaß herausgegeben in Verbindung mit INGEBORG SCHNACK und WILHELM SCHOOF. Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag, Veröffentlichungen der Historischen Kommission für Hessen und Waldeck, XXIII, 1, 1953. Pp. xii + 524. DM 31.90, brosch.; DM 33.80, ganzleinen.

It is certainly rare that such a valuable collection of letters as these should be withheld from the public for over 100 years. Adolf Stoll, the author of the standard work on Savigny (1927-1939), was not permitted to use them; and his son Walther Stoll, who received permission from the Savigny family to edit them, died toward the end of World War II.

These 199 letters, the majority from Jacob Grimm, are illuminating for studies both of the writers and of the addressee. It is well known, particularly from the memoirs of the two brothers, what their former teacher had meant to them. "Diesem Manne verdanke ich alle wissenschaftliche Anregung für mein Leben," wrote Jacob Grimm; and Wilhelm confessed: "Er ist der einzige Mann, den ich in dem Grad verehere. Mein Zutrauen zu ihm ist grenzenlos" ("Einführung," 4 f.). The letters bear witness to this feeling of love and respect. Both brothers Grimm depended on Savigny for advice in all important matters and liked to share their experiences, discoveries, and opinions with their beloved teacher and friend. In writing, Jacob Grimm felt even freer to express himself than in personal contact.

These letters contain a wealth of material concerning the two men's lives, all their scholarly work in the various stages of production, and even books read by them. There are discussions of philological matters, samples of translations from the Edda and of Danish poems, and the first versions of six German fairy tales sent for Savigny's children. Jacob Grimm, particularly, enjoyed going into details. "Blos in dem behaglichen, umfassenden Studium des Einzelnen ist die eigentliche Lust und nachher mag man sich auch kurz darüber fassen, nach Schlicklichkeit; ich bin aber gewiß, daß wer das Detail weiß, es auch geben wird" (61). On Niebuhr's *Römische Geschichte* he wrote a letter of ten printed pages in the present edition. Contemporary scholarly and literary productions and their authors are frequently commented upon; e.g., Goethe on Dürer (40, 44), the *Venetianische Epigramme* (83), *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* (88), *Die Farbenlehre* (106), *Der westöstliche Divan* (291).

Notwithstanding the "unglaubliche Frivolität" of the *Venetianische Epigramme* (blamed for having influenced the Germanist von der Hagen to marry "eine

Frau aus dem öffentlichen Haus... wo sie schon sechs Jahre gewesen" [83]). both brothers admired Goethe, and Jacob condemned Menzel for his "alberner Haß gegen Göthe" (382). They were often critical about Herder (117), Arnim (88), and Brentano (*Gockel, Hinkel und Gackeleia* [389]). They completely rejected the "neusten Unfug in der deutschen Literatur..." Jacob Grimm wrote, "Die Gutzkow, Mund[t], Rahels Briefe sind mir von Grund aus zuwider..." (382). Occasionally, and especially when it made a good story, he also reported some gossip; e.g., "poetisch verschönerte Sagen" about August Wilhelm Schlegel's eccentricities (282).

These letters show that utmost devotion to scholarly work need not result in a withdrawal into an ivory tower. Both brothers followed with keen interest the ups and downs in the lives of their relatives and friends and at the same time were concerned with world affairs. Their patriotic feeling found expression in many of the letters. From Vienna, where in 1814 Jacob was in the capacity of a *Gesandtschaftssekretär*, he wrote about the "teure Sache unseres lieben Vaterlands" (180), the dwindling hope of a new Kaiser "weil Preußen Oestreich nicht traut und nicht genug zugeben will" (180), the detrimental attitude of the other great powers, e.g., the Russians, "sie sind comödiantisch und anmaßend wie Franzosen" (181), and the "Verdorbenheit der bair Regierung" which he brands as "höchst undeutsch" (182).

Jacob Grimm liked to draw consolation from the positive sides of history: "nicht daß man der Kräfte Absterben einzeln verfolgen wolle, sondern ihre frohen Wiedergeburten erkennen" (216). He agreed with Savigny (in 1819), "daß wir in einer bitteren Zeit leben, in welcher es einem nicht gegönnt ist, unserm Studium mit recht gedeihlicher Herzensruhe nachzuhängen" (278). In his liberalism he believed with Arnim that the time would come "wo Adel und Bürgerstand zus fallen" (293). Highly revealing is Jacob Grimm's attitude toward the French revolution in 1830: "ich gestehe daß ich zu Paris entschieden es mit den bürgern gehalten hätte, wie ich zu Luthers zeit dem glauben meiner väter abtrünnig und protestant geworden wäre" (359). He was shocked, however, about the "Gräuel" of the revolution: "Glücklich wer seine Hände nicht in solche Dinge zu mischen braucht" (357).

The strength of his liberal and democratic feeling was evidenced in his resignation as professor at Göttingen—he was one of the protesting *Göttinger Sieben*—and these letters throw additional light on this matter. The spirit behind it is expressed with impressive simplicity: "Es gibt augenblicke, wo man bloß zu handeln hat, ohne rücksicht auf vergangenheit oder zukunft" (359), written seven years before Jacob's action. On the latter he commented just as simply: "mein Gewissen läßt sich keinen Meineid zumuten..." (390).

Neither Jacob nor Wilhelm Grimm thought that they would make good university professors (329). Priceless is the timid way in which Jacob reported the wish of the authorities that, in addition to the duties as librarians in Göttingen, "wir auch vorlesungen versuchen" (352). Extraordinary from our point of view is the statement that a course in history of literature had not been given for ten years (386). There is a familiar ring, however, in Wilhelm Grimm's complaint that the students "denken an nichts, als an das Examen." He calls this spirit "eine glänzende Roheit, wie sie etwa in Amerika gilt" (363). Interesting, too, are the comments about a considered reform of the academic system which would stress closer contact between teacher and students and greater participation of the students in the courses (375).

The main editor and his collaborator deserve great praise for making this important body of letters available in such a way that it can be read continuously



with understanding even by nonspecialists. There is not only an excellent informative general introduction, but each larger section of letters is introduced by a short biographical account. Comments between letters clear up allusions in the correspondence and give the book continuity and unity. The notes, quite substantial in themselves (63 pages), are restricted to information on individual points. They are followed by a bibliography, a chronological list of the letters, and an index of names. Short separate indexes list references in the letters to works by the Grimm brothers and Savigny, including planned research. Particularly extensive letters about scholarly works are singled out. It is indeed fortunate that this important correspondence has found such competent editors.

HANS JAEGER

*Indiana University*

*Grillparzer: Das dichterische Werk.* By WALTER NAUMANN. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, Urban-Bücher der Wissenschaftliche Taschenbuchreihe 17, 1956. Pp. xiii + 182. DM 3.60.

This volume on Grillparzer in the popular "scientific pocket book" edition of the Urban series is not the usual monograph alternating between accounts of the life and the works of a great writer. (There is, however, a brief biographical sketch as an introduction, pp. vii-xiii). Even the works are not dealt with in a chronological or evolutionary manner (although no doubt is left as to their sequence and their author's development) to which one is accustomed in conventional monographs. The aim here seems to be an explication of Grillparzer's poetic substance rather than a critical inventory of his entire production. The method used is not so much one of sculpturally fashioning the total surface with a resulting superficial effect, as one of depth sampling in characteristic areas.

Naumann proceeds from Grillparzer's language. Gundolf, and after him the consensus of the critical opinion, denies Grillparzer his own poetic "tone" and thereby his claim to poetic greatness. Naumann, suggesting that such verdicts of "absence" sometimes may refer to the organ of perception rather than the observed phenomenon, analyzes Grillparzer's poetic style and comes to the conclusion that in his language "ein Ideal der Sprachgebung vorliegt, dem Gundolfs Urteil nicht gerecht wird" (p. 2). Having established Grillparzer's poetic genius on the basis of the medium used, the author continues his assaying by means of characteristic samples and demonstrates Grillparzer's self-projection in his works, using *Der arme Spielmann* as an example, and evaluates his total dramatic attainment in *Ein Bruderzwist in Habsburg*—according to Naumann, Grillparzer's greatest work.

These three chapters form the first part of the book, entitled "Zugang." The second part, "Themen," is devoted to a discussion, again in a characteristic rather than exhaustive fashion, of three of Grillparzer's basic themes: *Sein* and *Schein*, Judgment, and Time. Here the entire panorama of the dramatic work is unfolded. And finally, in Part III Grillparzer's "Stellung" within world literature is assessed. In the first of two essays destined for this purpose, "Goethe und Grillparzer," the Austrian dramatist is shown in his relationship and contrast to the German poet, because "der einzige Berührungspunkt, der für den Deutschen die Grundlage zur Wertung des Einzelnen abgeben kann, sei Goethe..." (p. 107). The second essay examines Grillparzer's attitude toward the Spanish drama, reflecting those European forms and values by which Grillparzer transcends the Weimar tradition.

As a whole, Naumann's book is a stimulating and successful attempt at under-

standing Grillparzer on the premise of his own creative configuration instead of applying to him the traditional yardstick of the French and German classical drama. Naumann's "characteristic" approach is sufficient to present Grillparzer's poetic world naturally and convincingly, and yet leaves room for the reader's imagination and for future contributions.

EGON SCHWARZ

Harvard University

*Nietzsche and the French: A Study of the Influence of Nietzsche's French Reading on His Thought and Writing.* By W. D. WILLIAMS. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1952. Pp. xxi + 206. 25s.

More than a thousand books have been written about Nietzsche, yet only a few have given any serious attention to the French influence on his work. It is true that, in the first of his six volumes on Nietzsche, Andler included a discussion of the German philosopher's French *précurseurs*. Bauer and Lohmann have each linked Nietzsche with Pascal, and Kramer has written about Nietzsche and Rousseau. But it has remained for W. D. Williams to present the first thorough and detailed study of Nietzsche and the French.

Williams begins his study with Nietzsche's arrival in Basel in 1869 to assume his professorship. He adopts the generally accepted division of Nietzsche's intellectual development into three stages, and each period of this development thus forms a major section of the book. The first period, "From Aesthetic Pessimism to Scepticism," includes the publication of *Die Geburt der Tragödie*, and ends with the break with Wagner in 1876. The second period, that of "The Sceptic," begins with the writing of *Menschliches Allzumenschliches* that same year, and continues until *Die Morgenröthe* in 1881. *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft* marks the transition from the second period to the period of "The Final Weltanschauung," which ends with Nietzsche's mental collapse in 1888.

Each section starts with an account of Nietzsche's intellectual and philosophical development during the period, as well as of the pertinent external events of his life. This is followed by a detailed report of the French authors he was reading at the time and of their influence on him. Williams can hardly be blamed for omitting an analysis of the intellectual currents flowing through Europe in those years, for this is a specialized study of one aspect of Nietzsche's thought. The author effectively fulfills the promise of his subtitle, and presents "a study of the influence of Nietzsche's French reading on his thought and writing."

Studies of influence are always difficult and may easily lead a critic along uncertain paths. But Williams has handled this problem capably. He knows which books Nietzsche had in his library, but he is well aware that a writer may own a book, read it, or even comment on it, without necessarily being influenced by it. This is one of those simple facts of literary life that has sometimes escaped students of influences. Thus Williams' estimates of direct influences are sober and conservative, but do not lack boldness and courage where these qualities are called for. He presents this part of his work in appropriate detail and reproduces pertinent passages from Nietzsche and the French writers he studied. The wealth of evidence he offers reveals the range of his own French reading, for even his footnotes contain interesting parallels and comparisons. All passages quoted are in the original French or German, and the quotations from Nietzsche are translated in an appendix to the text.

Nietzsche had no real knowledge of French thought up to the time of his appointment at Basel. He began with the moralists of the sixteenth and seven-

teenth centuries and eventually extended his studies through the French writers of the nineteenth century. But he found little to admire in the works of such modern French thinkers as Comte and Renan, nor did he care for many of the literary figures of his own century. Although he disliked the Goncourts, Flaubert, and Zola, he had great admiration for Stendhal, who exerted a considerable influence on him.

Yet it was the earlier French thinkers who played the greatest role in Nietzsche's thought, especially La Rochefoucauld, Montaigne, and Pascal. Williams points out that "the movement of Nietzsche's mind, which is far more than simply the emancipation from his early masters, Wagner and Schopenhauer, is largely the result of the paramount influence of the French moralists, and especially Montaigne, whose unruffled Epicureanism is the best antidote to the woolliness of Wagner's romanticism."

The author draws careful distinctions between those who, like Montaigne, exerted a strong and positive influence on Nietzsche and those who, like Comte, aroused only hostility. Perhaps the most interesting figures in this intellectual drama are those with whom he struggled, like Pascal. For Nietzsche, Pascal was the representative Christian, and he felt that if he could refute Pascal, he could refute Christianity. In his conclusion, which forms a concise summary of his book, Williams reminds us that "Nietzsche's love of Pascal, his delight in his writings, and his oft-expressed feeling of indebtedness to him, is perhaps the most paradoxical of the many problems he raises."

The value of the book is enhanced by a "select bibliography." Since it is select, this reviewer will not quarrel with it, but he can not help being puzzled by at least one omission, that of Walter A. Kaufmann's *Nietzsche* (1950). Is it possible that Williams' book was already in press when the American work reached England? In any case, readers with any interest in philosophy or literature will welcome Williams' important contribution to the understanding of Nietzsche, who has been so often and sometimes so willfully misunderstood. It is now more than half a century since Nietzsche's death, and in spite of unscrupulous attempts to pervert his teachings for the purposes of political propaganda, he remains one of the most striking and influential phenomena in modern intellectual history. Williams has done much to clarify the origin and progress of his thought.

SEYMOUR L. FLAXMAN

University College  
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*Jean-Pierre de Crousas (1663-1750) et le conflit des idées au siècle des lumières.*

By JACQUELINE E. DE LA HARPE. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Publications in Modern Philology, Vol. 47, 1955. Pp. 281. \$3.00.

The reader who consults a review in order to form a general impression of the work that is discussed and of the way in which it is related to the main currents of the period in which it was written will find such a review in Daniel Mornet's *Préface* to Mlle de la Harpe's book. It is not surprising that Professor Mornet took a particular interest in the present study, for it throws new light on a relatively unknown aspect of the cultural history of Europe in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Crousaz' works, and above all his correspondence, are an interesting illustration of the currents of ideas and the cultural trends in a milieu somewhat on the periphery of the great intellectual centers. Daniel Mornet frequently emphasized the fact that such social circles,

and the minor authors who were their bright stars, are not to be neglected; it was part of his belief in the importance of background study and the broad picture of a period. The lesson is valuable, no doubt; but it must not lead, as it frequently does, to a general leveling and standardization of ideas; it must not blunt the perception of the individual traits and the personal accent in the thought of the great writers.

Mlle de la Harpe's choice of topic as well as her approach to it were definitely determined by her high evaluation of the broad picture of ideas and the cultural life in the various intellectual circles of the Age of Enlightenment. Her inquiry was furthermore directed by a belief in a period of transition between the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, a period in which we are supposed to witness the gradual emerging of the Age of Enlightenment, against many resistances, and the slow dissolving of the seventeenth century. Both processes are said to have gone on at approximately the same speed; they are described either as a combination of gliding down and rising up, or as a succession of crises. The conception of a period of transition provides, moreover, a rather efficient though mechanical method of establishing the dosage of old and new ideas in the case of any given author. Thanks to an enviable faith in simplification, Descartes is identified with rationalism, Locke with empiricism, and Newton with experimentalism. Wherever the term "feeling" occurs, we must recognize the pulse of the new period. The present study gives everywhere evidence of having been conceived within this frame of thought.

The title of Mlle de la Harpe's book, *Jean-Pierre de Crousaz et le conflit des idées au siècle des lumières*, is inaccurate, for it suggests a major concern with the history of ideas. In reality, the author deals predominantly with Crousaz' biography and his exchange of letters with various correspondents. Mlle de la Harpe gained access to unpublished letters by Crousaz. She uses the information contained in these letters for a broader and more accurate account than we had before of the life, interests, and activities of the Swiss educator and philosopher. Her work is a valuable and interesting addition to the rapidly increasing series of publications of newly discovered or newly edited letters of the eighteenth century. The method of combining direct quotations of significant passages with summaries or descriptions of less important parts of the correspondence seems to me highly commendable. A publication of the entire text would have defeated the purpose of stimulating interest in Crousaz.

The plan of the book clearly illustrates the author's preponderant concern for biographical and general historical facts: the first chapter is entitled "Le Personnage et son cadre," the second "Correspondance et correspondants," the third "L'Œuvre et l'homme." About forty pages are given to a presentation of Crousaz' ideas and their connection with the great philosophic systems of the period; within these pages much space is taken up by mere summary of some of Crousaz' works. To be sure, Mlle de la Harpe occasionally refers to Crousaz' ideas also in the second chapter of her book. In Chapter III she deliberately avoids a detailed discussion of Crousaz' philosophic, aesthetic, or scientific ideas and sticks to safe generalities when mentioning the agreement or conflict between Crousaz and the great thinkers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As a result, the reader is left with a feeling of frustration, and Crousaz himself appears not infrequently to be as shallow as he was *bien pensant*. The limitation to generalities also leads to erroneous statements, as, for instance, in the discussion of Crousaz' relation with Leibniz.

These shortcomings are compensated for by the wealth of partly new information on Crousaz' personal life and the cultural life of Switzerland, Holland, and

Germany. One reads with pleasure the author's well documented, rapid, lively, and colorful description of the various circles in which Crousaz lived or with which he came into contact. Only rarely does Mlle de la Harpe indulge in a deliberate literary style. The succinct but informative biographical sketches which accompany the mention of Crousaz' friends and correspondents are a welcome source of information for those who wish to orientate themselves in the intellectual society of Europe in the early eighteenth century. The appendixes on Crousaz' correspondence, his life, and his works are equally useful.

HERBERT DIECKMANN

Harvard University

*Development of French Romanticism: The Impact of the Industrial Revolution on Literature.* By ALBERT JOSEPH GEORGE. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1955. Pp. xiii + 193. \$3.00.

Romanticism is perhaps an impossibly difficult concept to define comprehensively, and definitions of it illuminate only an arc foreordained by the direction of focus: all else is in (pen)umbra. Interpreters have proposed partial and even antithetical labels like anticlassicism, egocentrism, modernism, out-of-jointism, humanitarianism, irrational imperialism—a babble-Babel that almost passeth understanding. (See, for one recent general discussion of some troublesome features, "Problèmes du Romantisme," *Revue des Sciences Humaines*, n.s., No. 62-63 [avril-septembre 1951].) A method that may work like multiple guidelines is that of *synthèse historique*, which attempts to describe the temporal convergence and parallel of many factors. In this way one aspect may at times be in the foreground, while the others are background; with a shift in concentration, a part of the background moves into prominence; but all elements—literary, political, social, economic, etc.—contribute to the illumination and illustration of each other. Needless to say, these data are not to be equated with aesthetics itself: they do not evaluate the artistic merits of a piece of literature. But the consideration of the nonliterary can give depth and greater cogency to the strictly literary. The accumulation of monographs on individual aspects may eventuate in a valid inclusive description.

Professor George has long been attracted by the intellectual and social forces in romanticism: his dissertation examined *Lamartine and Romantic Unanimism* (Columbia University Press, 1940); five years later he published a study of the social and religious thinker, *Pierre Simon Ballanche, Precursor of Romanticism* (Syracuse University Press); and he treated "Literature and Society" at the 1952 MLA meeting which discussed the literature of the Second Empire (published in *Symposium*, VII [May, 1953]).

In the present work, "the fundamental thesis... is that the Industrial Revolution functioned as one of the prime sources of romanticism, and, simultaneously, became a principal force in transforming the initial character of that literature. Replies are sought to such questions as: why did romanticism change so fundamentally about 1830; why did it break into splinter movements; and why these particular movements" (p. xi). The demonstration is in two parts: Part One, which occupies one-third of the book, treats of "The Background"; Part Two, of "The Development of Romanticism." The time spanned is 1800-1852, with 1830 the pivotal year.

The answers to these questions are, of course, the whole book. By 1830 the pace of France's tardy Industrial Revolution had stepped up; the composition, interests, and capacities of the reading public had changed; new ideas and values

were approaching ascendancy. The other questions posed stem from the principal one: the advent of "populist," class-conscious literature and the supremacy of the novel would, on the one hand, not have come about without the influence of economic and political factors; and, on the other hand, the individual artist had to achieve his equilibrium amid the stresses of his antecedents, contemporary pressures (aesthetic, practical, opportunistic, competitive), and his abilities. And there is determinism, though "it should not be assumed that the Industrial Revolution was the only factor governing the development of romanticism, nor that it regulated the growth of the new literature according to a kind of determinism" (p. xii). Professor George adds immediately: "It should be clearly kept in mind that the events which conspired to push romanticism in the direction it took occurred from historical coincidence." But the data he presents permit a somewhat more acquiescent opinion that the pressures were so great that the static had to become kinetic in the particular way we describe as romantic.

The literary historian will probably be especially grateful for the information on the economic and societal conditions that prevailed during this time: vital statistics put a body beneath the red vest and bonnet of romanticism. The correlations between trends in literature and publishing expenses, literacy and techniques of distribution, are impressive. (Consider, in recent terms of reference, the intimate connections between "pocket books," supply and sales methods, libraries and reading habits; think how economic and ideological problems have affected the tone of twentieth-century fiction—Malcolm Cowley's *The Literary Situation* is an attempt, though somewhat polemical, to take such interrelationships into account for our own times.) These facts put solid foundations beneath the pinnacles of manifestoes and artistic successes. We have a sharper definition of why the novel became the dominant genre, and how criticism came to shift in effectiveness, nature, and purpose.

The chapter on "The Development of the Novel" is especially stimulating for the aesthete. The distinctions between the romance and the novel, and the transition from the pretended practice of four requisites—didacticism, verisimilitude, observance of the proprieties, and entertainment—to emphasis on psychological truth, character delineation, environmental accuracy, and awareness of historical forces, are striking. (One may cavil at the rejection of *La Princesse de Clèves* as a genuine novel and at the reduction of eighteenth-century examples to mere modified prolongations of earlier forms and ideas.) The recognition accorded "proletarian" writers like Jean Reboul, Reine Garde, Charles Poncy, Antoinette Quarré, and their sponsorship by a Lamartine or a George Sand, brings into focus a usually neglected group. Each is neatly and succinctly differentiated, but the reader feels he has learned much about, for example, *La Ruche populaire*, "journal des ouvriers rédigé et publié par eux-mêmes." Cogent too is the adumbration of new myths which replace an exhausted pantheon: machinery, Satan, Napoleon, become symbols for a new public.

Professor George's presentation is highly compact, without discursiveness. It is unfortunate that present-day economics of publishing have persuaded him to keep "the number of footnotes . . . to a minimum, though some scholars may object" (p. xiii) and to dispense with an index. It is surprising, nevertheless, that he had not put his publisher—who has produced a readable, clear, and carefully edited book (except for a garbled phrase, p. 77, l. 7)—to the expense of listing David Owen Evans' valuable *Social Romanticism in France, 1830-1848; with a selective critical bibliography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951). The attribution (p. x) of *Le Roman social sous la monarchie de juillet* (Paris: Presses Universitaires, 1930) to "D. W. Owen" should be corrected to read



D. O. Evans; the reference to *Socialisme des romantiques* intends the same author's *Le Socialisme romantique: Pierre Leroux et ses contemporains* (Paris: M. Rivière, 1948). No doubt Pierre Brochon's *Le Livre de colportage en France depuis le XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle; sa littérature, ses lecteurs* (Paris: Gründ, 1954) was published too recently to be mentioned. As it stands, Professor George's book is an informative and helpful view of a literature in life; the new edition it deserves will be even more useful with fuller references.

A point incidental to the thesis of the present study: Professor George accepts the standard consensus that Renaudot's *Gazette* was the first French newspaper. *Les Débuts de la presse française: nouveaux aperçus* (Göteborg: Wettergren & Kerber; Paris: Librairie Raymann, 1951, Acta Bibliothecae Gotoburgensis, IV) by Folke Dahl, Fanny Petibon, and Marguerite Boulet, may—when sufficiently known—alter that attribution to read: "Caspar van Hilten d'Amsterdam doit être considéré comme le premier éditeur du premier journal politique en français, et il convient d'honorer comme éditeurs du premier journal politique paru en France non pas Théophraste Renaudot, mais les deux libraires parisiens Louys Vendosme et Jean Martin" (*Les Débuts*, p. 38).

University of Washington

S. S. WEINER

*La Poesia del Pascoli*. By GIOVANNI CECCHETTI. Pisa: Libreria Goliardica Editrice, Studi e Testi 7, 1954. Pp. 147. L. 1800.

Born in the small village of San Mauro (near Rimini) in 1855, Giovanni Pascoli officially began his literary career in 1891 with the publication of a collection of poems entitled *Myricae*, still believed to be his best by the consensus of the critics. In the next two decades nine additional volumes of poetry followed *Myricae*, and these, along with the pseudo-criticism and essays Pascoli wrote toward the last years of his life, form a respectable production, at least from the point of view of quantity and breadth. His life was spent in the tranquillity of the classrooms, teaching the classics and Italian literature; the relative security and comfort of the teaching profession compensated somewhat for the unhappiness of his boyhood. Before Pascoli had become an adolescent, he had lost his father (murdered by unknown thugs, presumably for political reasons) and a score of close relatives. Early in life, too, he experienced the dangers of political unorthodoxy by spending three months in jail for his militant, and at times violent, socialism. His studies were pursued, amid much poverty, at the University of Bologna, where he returned as professor of Italian literature upon the death of his former teacher, the renowned poet, critic, and scholar, Giosuè Carducci. He died in 1911.

Excellently schooled in the classics, Pascoli won many prizes for poetic achievement in Latin. Learned and sensitive, he is remembered today less for his Latin poetry and critical essays than for his numerous delicate, if often naïve, compositions which are among the first to be committed to memory by Italian children when they begin their primary education.

To poetry Pascoli brought a new, almost hypnotic, sense of rhythm and a diction which, unlike that of some of the earlier poets, was both simple and accurate without being archaic or stilted. Admired in his lifetime, imitated after his death, studied by some, ridiculed by others (Benedetto Croce was responsible for coining the definition of "piccolo-grande-poeta" or "grande-piccolo-poeta," that was to influence an entire generation of critics),<sup>1</sup> Pascoli's poetry is today

<sup>1</sup> Benedetto Croce, *La letteratura della Nuova Italia*, VI (Bari, 1942), 72-129, 231-55. The first essay was written in 1906, the second in 1919.



an accepted milestone in the history of Italian literature. But if he can justly claim a place in the development of a poetic "style," the influence he has exerted upon subsequent "schools" remains a vexing and unanswered question. This in spite of the fact that every critic has openly accepted the idea that Pascoli has played a definite role in the development of probably every major poet, from the *crepuscolari* to the *ermetici*.

The monograph under consideration springs from a series of lectures delivered by a young teacher of Italian at the University of California at Berkeley. The author does not make any major claim for a book which, as he says in the "Avvertenza," is meant to be "solo un'introduzione alla lettura del Pascoli." It is extremely unfortunate, so far as this reviewer is concerned, that Cecchetti did not choose to write his "essay" in English. Had he done so he would have written a useful book for the student of things Italian whose knowledge of Italian literature is hampered both by his being monolingual and by the regrettable lack of informative manuals.

From the tone of the first pages it is abundantly clear that Cecchetti wishes to address himself to an audience sampling Pascoli for the first time, and that his assignment is therefore one proper to a teacher. It is commendable that, whatever shortcomings the book may otherwise have, its author has wisely used an eclectic approach which, in the present circumstances, is well suited to the introductory nature of the monograph.

Having briefly reviewed Pascoli criticism (which begins with the essay by Croce previously mentioned), the author proceeds to discuss Pascoli's poetics and, in greater detail, the troubling "questione della lingua"—a problem every Italian literary artist faces and must solve along the lines dictated not by theoretical arguments but by his sensibility. The next several chapters are devoted to a discussion of the most recurrent themes and moods of Pascoli's poetry, while the final chapter tries to round off some of the observations made throughout the book and gives a general (far too general, in my opinion) evaluation of Pascoli's *opera poetica*. Incidentally, one of the useful comments Cecchetti does make (concerning Pascoli's use of the *enjambement* and the "rima impermetra") is unfortunately relegated to a footnote. A selected bibliography concludes the volume.

An evaluation of Cecchetti's monograph must obviously not lose sight of its admittedly limited scope. Yet one is tempted to ask, and this is probably the crux of this reviewer's objections, whether a "general" volume on Pascoli is truly needed at this stage. The ever-growing bibliography on the poet from San Mauro points up what is the central flaw of much Pascoli criticism, namely, the inability or unwillingness of the critics to take a larger view of the various formal and cultural problems posed by Pascoli's poetry and to try to see his poetry as more than just a "national" phenomenon. There is an urgent need, for instance, of a book that will consider and carefully evaluate Pascoli within the larger frame of European (and not merely Italian) culture and that will spell out in detail the influence upon him of the French symbolists and decadents and, too, Pascoli's own amazing influence upon the succeeding literary generations. Such a book might well take as its point of departure some of the remarks made by Alfredo Galletti in his volume published in 1947.

That Pascoli has shaped, or brought innovations to, Italian poetic style is no longer a discovery—it is a commonplace; nor is it worth repeating what has often been said by a good many other critics (and said better) that from the *crepuscolari* and the early Palazzeschi and d'Annunzio to Eugenio Montale one

is struck again and again by that cadence, that internal and external rhythm that was brought to poetry by Pascoli. Finally, there is little sense, in times of exorbitant printing costs, to publish a book that, while written with good intentions, is hardly a contribution to our knowledge of a poet and, moreover, fails even to challenge the reader to reread a literary text and rediscover, in the light of the critic's lamp, that special pleasure and "knowledge" which only poetry can give us.

The goal of illuminating a literary text is, after all, the critic's main justification for his position in modern society, and it is to this goal that any critic, irrespective of his method or his "school," is really committed. T. S. Eliot put this question in clear terms when he wrote: "Criticism must always profess an end in view, which, roughly speaking, appears to be the elucidation of works of art and the correction of taste." While Cecchetti does at times elucidate the text before him, he seldom brings to his subject the kind of fresh, original, even bold, insights we have the right to expect from one who has the benefit of much spade work valiantly done by previous critics. For this reason, as well as for the various others mentioned in the course of this review, it seems to me that, while Cecchetti's treatment of a limited subject is not entirely "sbagliato," his book is, alas, very much "superfluo."

SERGIO PACIFICI

Yale University

*The "Epistolae Metricae" of Petrarch: A Manual.* By ERNEST H. WILKINS.  
Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, Sussidi Eruditi 8, 1956. Pp. 35.

It does not seem incongruous that Petrarch's letters should receive some attention from the editorial point of view. This aspect (even if we preferred it not to be) is not one of external history but, in the case of Petrarch, seems to be connected rather intrinsically with the literary and biographical ones. Findings in this direction may not be expected to revolutionize our picture of Petrarch, but they will doubtless convey to us a deeper insight into the spirit of a man for whom writing was like a second element. As he himself said in one of his letters, "scribere cupio nec quid aut cui scribam scio."

We should therefore be thankful to Professor Wilkins for having undertaken (for only two groups of letters so far) a critical over-all view of the different problems involved concerning attributions, addressees, places of writing, and dates. The arrangement adopted in the present publication is that already applied to *De Rebus Familiaribus* by the same author (*Prose Letters of Petrarch: A Manual* [New York: S. F. Vanni, 1951]).

The basis for the manual is the body of Petrarch's own collection of the *Epistolae Metricae* as reflected in the Venetian edition of 1501, which is compared in a table with the differently arranged Rossetti-edition of 1831-34. Following this collection of sixty-six letters, which was dedicated to Marco Barbato da Sulmona, is a list of twelve "*Epistolae Metricae Variæ*," not included by Petrarch in his collection, but considered by Wilkins "more or less justifiably classifiable as *epistolae metricae*." Next the author discusses addressees and places of writing, pointing out that for the nine letters not addressed by Petrarch addressees have been found with "complete or virtual certainty," so that there remain unknown only the addressees of I, 9, and of the two-line fragment EMV 12, quoted by Petrarch in his Coronation Oration.

Part III of the manual gives an alphabetical list of all studies containing discussions of the dates of the *Epistolae Metricae* since Diana Magrini's *Le epis-*

*tole metriche di Francesco Petrarca* (1907). As Wilkins says, "Only passages containing some argumentation have been regarded as 'discussions': unsupported statements of opinion have been disregarded." As such would also be counted the one of Umberto Bosco, who says of the *Epistolae Metricae*: "Tra le databili, a prescindere dai versi per la morte della madre, la più remota risale al 1333; tre o quattro soltanto son posteriori al '50, nessuna al '54" (U. Bosco, *Petrarca* [Torino, 1946], p. 324; reprinted with his essay on Petrarch in *Orientamenti Culturali: Letteratura Italiana, I Maggiori* [Milano, 1956], I, 170). No matter what Bosco understands under "databile" (if a conjectural or certain ascription, and he seems to mean the latter), not a single one of the discussions listed by Wilkins attributes 1333 as a date to a letter (with whatever degree of certainty). It is true that Bosco has not in any way backed up his statement, but as a student of the subject he might be expected to have reached such a conviction by his own pondering over the matter.

This remark does not intend to find fault with the manual. Questions like this one were excluded from the outset. But opinions like Bosco's which suggest authority might make us aware of the fact that a definite chronological arrangement of Petrarch's letters with any degree of certainty seems to be condemned to remain always a desideratum, and that such a question becomes increasingly complicated with the *Epistolae Metricae*, since Petrarch here never bothered to affix a date or a place of writing.

Thus Part IV, which lists the single letters as to addressee, place of writing, and probable dates assigned to them by the different studies, shows studies disagreeing on a date by sometimes as much as eleven years (as in the case of III, 11) or ten years (as in the case of I, 8). It might, therefore, seem mere quibbling to expect a more precise fixing of the date of III, 24, "Salve, cara Deo tellus," than that given by Magrini as 1353, although we may assume it to have been written in May of that year. The *élan* and the immediacy of this salutation to Italy make a strong point for its having been written under the impression of that final decision for his country, for the Italy with which he was henceforth to tie his fate—be the wording of line one a dissimulated or an unconscious quote from Vergil's *Georgica*.

The undertaking of a critical survey of this complexity is a thankless one, for there are no conclusions to be reached. The manual remains a tabulation of research done in a certain field. Being glad, on the one hand, that it has been undertaken by one who can add to the mere technical job the wealth of his own personal information and judgment, we should like to see a little more of it. As it is, one who is not familiar with the single essays and their authority feels a little like the Boccaccian "vulgo, messo in galea senza biscotto et senza alcun piloto lasciato in mar a lui non noto," for what he can deduce from the tabulated results of the essays in certain cases is simply that they differ.

A study of this nature does not derive its value from its size. Therefore we see no need for the flyleaf to be counted as pages 1 and 2, and for the actual study to begin at page 11, which is at about one-third of the booklet. For this study by one of the most renowned and critical Petrarch scholars (and by no means a "lecteur paisible et bucolique") should prove to be a valuable tool in a field where the most diverse opinions are voiced. It might even be such for the final critical edition of the *Epistolae Metricae*, the proof sheets of which the late Enrico Bianchi has left behind.

OSCAR BÜDEL

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*Julien Benda.* By ROBERT J. NEISS. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1956. Pp. x + 361. \$6.50.

The dust jacket of this beautifully printed and well-bound volume quotes Rebecca West on Benda as "unworthy of a single word of praise." We must assume that those who feel as Miss West did are not likely to see any reason for the existence of a book on Benda. Those who agree, as I do, with the statement by Irving Babbitt, also on the dust jacket, that Benda was "an acute diagnostician of the modern mind and its disorders," consider a full-length study of him long overdue. Granting the need for a book on Benda, it is hard to see how one could find serious fault with this one, so remarkable a synthesis is it of his interminable writings.

Benda was a man of many apparent and real contradictions. Merely to follow and to understand his attitude toward Nietzsche, which is one of many threads in this book, is an accomplishment in itself, for although Benda considered Nietzsche the second worst influence on the modern mind, he was a follower of Nietzsche in his early writings and never completely freed himself of Nietzsche's influence. In this connection, one would have liked to see the conclusions of Niess' "Julien Benda and Hugues Rebell" (*Modern Language Notes*, LXIII [1948], 174-76) more explicitly stated in the book; but anyone familiar with the bulk of Benda's writing will realize that Niess had to cope constantly with the need to compress the results of his many years of study into a manageable volume.

Though not taken in for a moment by Benda's frequently specious reasoning, Niess has written a great tribute to that bane of French intellectuals, that non-conformist among the nonconformists. Well documented and well written, this is a fitting farewell to a stout defender of old-fashioned Reason, who died scarcely a year ago and whose efforts began with the Dreyfus Case. If the latter can be called the trauma of Benda's intellectual birth, Bergsonism became the enemy which must be destroyed at all costs. The cost was great, but Benda apparently enjoyed being hated by almost everybody.

Those who have never liked Benda will find a vindication of their attitude here. On the other hand, those who admired the old (Benda was never young) curmudgeon's tenacious and indefatigable fight against the Irrational will enjoy the book, for Niess has written with judicious impartiality. No single volume could cover all the facets of Benda's mind, but this one is likely to remain the definitive work on Benda.

At a time when books purporting to be scholarly are appearing without indexes and with scanty bibliographies, it is a pleasure to note that this book is not deficient in these respects. Its utility is further extended by the inclusion of an appendix in which all long French quotations are translated into English.

EDWARD HARVEY

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